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# THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

By CLARA E. LAUGHLIN

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WHEN JOY BEGINS

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THE EVOLUTION OF A GIRL'S IDEAL

STORIES OF AUTHORS' LOVES

THE LADY IN GRAY

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN

“With malice toward none, with charity for all.”

# The Death of Lincoln

The Story of Booth's Plot, His Deed  
and the Penalty

By

CLARA E. LAUGHLIN

*Illustrated from Photographs*



New York  
Doubleday, Page & Company  
1909

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AFTER, INOX AND  
 THIRTY FOUNDATIONS  
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PUBLISHED, JANUARY, 1909



TO  
FRANCES BENJAMIN JOHNSTON



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PART I

THE PLOT





# THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

## I

### THE PLOT

ABOUT the twelfth of September, 1864, a young man helping to thresh wheat in a field near Hookstown, Maryland, had a letter brought to him. In it was either a twenty-dollar or a fifty-dollar bill.<sup>1</sup> After reading the letter and pocketing the money, the young man remarked laughingly, but not without a bit of swaggering importance, that he was "flush," and that something big would be heard of one of these days.

It was! The young man was in "a plot" which at that time would have seemed to any sober-minded person who might have known of it about as serious as the back-lot

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<sup>1</sup> "The Assassination of President Lincoln, and the Trial of the Conspirators," compiled and arranged by Benn Pitman, Recorder to the Military Commission. Published by Moore, Wiltach & Baldwin, Cincinnati and New York, 1865. The Pitman record of the Conspiracy Trial is the one hereinafter referred to, as that to which most persons have access. The record made for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and published by T. B. Peterson, Philadelphia, in 1865, and the report made for the Associated Press and published by Barclay & Co., Philadelphia, 1865, are "unedited" by the Bureau of Military Justice, and show some sharp discrepancies from the Pitman version; but for the reason that they are not everywhere available they have not been made the basis of most of these citations. For authority on Samuel Arnold's letter, and its enclosure, see the testimony of Littleton P. D. Newman, Conspiracy Trial, page 239.

plottings of exuberant boys bent on the extermination of Indians; it was a plot to kidnap the President of the United States and hold him for a ransom. Nobody knows how nearly the absurd plot came to accomplishment, but all the world has heard of the conspiracy which resulted in the death of Lincoln. The young man who got that letter was sufficiently connected with the President's death to pay a hideous penalty for it. Just how he and his fellows came into their connection with the great tragedy of the nation we shall now try to see.

The young man's name was Samuel Arnold, and he had been a soldier in the Confederate Army. After a long illness, however, he did not return to the service, but stayed with his people in and near Baltimore. Sam was a clerk when he could get clerical work to do, but either the times were bad for obtaining work of that sort or Sam was bad at finding it, for in the summer of '64 he was unemployed except for the desultory help he gave a farmer-brother near Hookstown.

Early in September, Sam and two old schoolmates of his had met at Barnum's Hotel in Baltimore.<sup>1</sup> One of the schoolmates was a small, quiet, rather delicate-looking young man, with thick black hair, heavy black moustache,

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<sup>1</sup> Arnold's statement to Eaton G. Horner C. T. p. 235. It was written and delivered by William McPhail to Stanton (C. T. p. 236), who did not allow it to be put in evidence.

# MAP

*Showing the Routes  
of Proposed Abduction of Lincoln  
and Actual Flight of Booth.*

Scale of Miles

0 5 10 15 20 25

VIRGINIA

MARYLAND

WASHINGTON

Anacostia

Upper Marlboro

TB

Dr. Mudd's

Bryantown

Brice's (lost)

Cox (hidden)

Port Tobacco

Navy Yard

Gambo Cr.

Machodoc Cr.

Port Conway

Garrett Farm

Port Royal

Bowling Green

Richmond

James River

Potomac River

Rappahannock

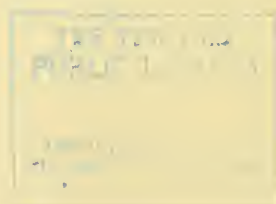
Suratville

Flight

Proposed Abduction

## INDEX:

- F = Ford's Theatre
- S = Soldier's Home
- B = Benning's Bridge
- N = Navy Yard
- D = Dent's Meadows
- G = Goose Cr.
- H = Col. Hughes
- A = Avon Cr.
- C = Gambo Creek Bridge
- L = Lucas Cabin



a small black imperial, and nervous black eyes that often looked sad. He, also, had been a Confederate soldier, but had taken the oath of allegiance in June, 1863, and since then had been in the feed and produce business with his brother William, in Baltimore and Washington. His name was Michael O'Laughlin.

The third of these young fellows, who had been close friends for a dozen years or more — ever since their little-boy days — was grown quite out of the class of the other two. He was brilliantly beautiful, very talented, very successful, very much sought after.<sup>1</sup> Although barely twenty-six years old, he had an income from his profession of about twenty thousand dollars a year. He was tall and full of slender grace; his features were classic in their perfectness; his big black eyes were teasing, tender, laughing, bewitching; a crown of slightly curling jet-black hair was worn pushed boyishly back from a brow of rare intellectual and physical beauty. He was elegant in his dress, blithe and winsome in his manner. Indeed, he was only too winsome — too easy to love and too hard to scold; too quick to charm and too charming to be judged. He was generous and kind, affectionate and gay. His name was John Wilkes Booth.

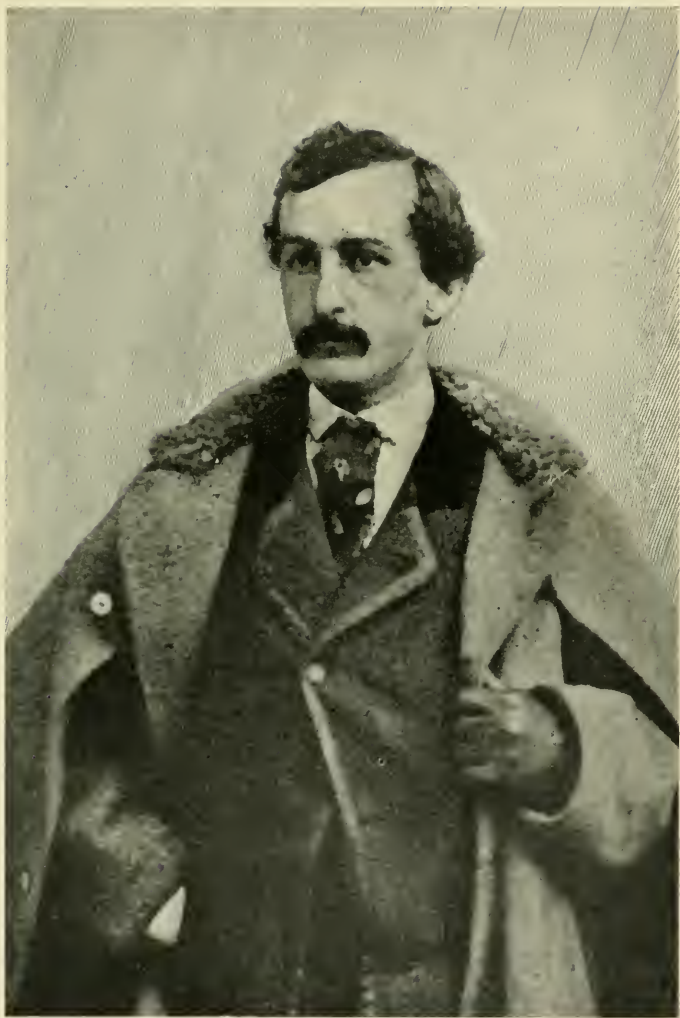
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<sup>1</sup> During a successful engagement of John W. Booth's in Boston, "women of all ages, and degrees pressed in crowds before the Tremont House to see him depart." "Life of J. W. Booth," by George Alfred Townsend, published by Dick and Fitzgerald, New York, 1866, p. 24.

John, the youngest but one of the ten children born to the celebrated tragedian, Junius Brutus Booth and his wife, Mary Ann, was named for his paternal great-grandmother's cousin, John Wilkes, parliamentary, lord mayor of London, and political agitator. Junius Brutus the elder died in 1852. He acted up to the very last, and died on tour in the West, but for years before his death his great mind had been unbalanced by his intemperate habits, so that the only father little John Booth ever knew was a madman, the wreck of a splendid genius, a lovable personality.

Of the six children who survived their father, three became famous members of his profession, but John Wilkes was universally considered the most gifted of the family, though a severe bronchial affection threatened his voice and, consequently, his future on the stage. He was the idol of his mother's heart and was, in turn, exceedingly fond of her — so fond that he made her a promise it was very hard for him to keep: a promise that he would never take up arms against the Union she and all her other children stanchly upheld.

John had spent the happiest, most impressionable years of his young professional life in the South, notably at Richmond, Virginia, where he was a member of John T. Ford's stock company and a warm favourite in and out of



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JOHN WILKES BOOTH

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the theatre. In 1859 he had been a volunteer soldier and did his part to put down treason by standing guard at the foot of the scaffold whereon John Brown was hanged. Four years later the Government that had put Brown to death for attempting to free the slaves made a new definition of treason: made it treasonable to resist the freeing of the slaves. John Booth did not accept the new definition. For him, despite the tears and protests of his family, right remained with the South; and although he had promised his dear mother he would not take up arms against the Union, John did not try to stifle his passionate sympathy with the Southern cause, his burning ardour to do something toward its success.

In Barnum's Hotel, Baltimore, that September day in '64, the three young men talked of the war and soberly discussed the repeated reverses of the Confederate armies, the steady swelling of Northern prisons with thousands upon thousands of Southern prisoners.<sup>1</sup>

It was then that John unfolded a stupendous scheme. So far as we know, he had conceived it quite recently and had not mentioned it to any one until that day. It was a plan to seize the President of the United States, hurry him out of Washington, down through intensely disloyal counties of Maryland to the Potomac, ferry him across into

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix I: Feeling about Lincoln in the North.

Virginia, and carry him to Richmond, there to turn him over to the Confederate authorities to be held on their own terms — either the termination of the war, or the exchange of one President for all Southern prisoners held by the North.

The two young men to whom this wild scheme was unfolded, and who were then and thereupon invited to become party to it, must have gasped at its audacity. But John explained how easy it would be. The President was impatient of being guarded, and often went about Washington unattended or with a single guard. It would be the easiest thing in the world for three or four fellows to seize him — say on one of his visits to the Soldiers' Home, out Seventh Street — thrust him into a closed carriage, drive rapidly into Maryland, and hasten to Richmond. Or, the capture might be made on one of his returns, unguarded, from the War Office to the White House, late at night. If seized then, he could be hurried down through the gardens of the White House to an old house on Seventeenth Street near the confluence of the Tyber and Potomac rivers. This house, built in 1820, had a cellar, reached by a trap-door, which was once used for a slave prison. There were "two acres of grounds around the house, filled with high trees and close shrubbery, and a high brick wall along the street, and any cries from it would be effectually

drowned long before reaching the street.”<sup>1</sup> Even the President of the United States, it seemed, might have been held prisoner there, close under the shadow of the White House, and spirited thence when opportunity offered. It was a daring plan, of course. But think of the glory there would be in it! It would probably end this hideously bloody war; and when the grateful Confederacy found itself victorious, there would surely be handsome rewards for the brave boys who had saved it. John was eloquent, enthusiastic, seemed to understand the situation thoroughly; of course the other boys “joined.” And of course, after that, Sam Arnold was less and less inclined to look for steady employment and more and more disturbingly given to talk of certain “prospects” about which he was mysteriously vague. The money in his letter of a week later was doubtless from his friend John, in consideration of Sam’s temporary need while great fortune awaited him.

On the twenty-seventh of September John went to Franklin, in the oil region of Pennsylvania, where he had invested six thousand dollars.<sup>2</sup> Every young man in those days speculated in oil. A few “struck it rich,” most of them sunk their money in wells and got nothing out but experience. John was one of the latter. For nine or ten

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<sup>1</sup> The trial of the assassins, as reported for the *Philadelphia Daily Inquirer* and published by T. B. Peterson and Brothers, Philadelphia, 1865, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 45, Joseph H. Simonds.

months he had been dabbling in oil, but now he was determined to stop; so he closed up his interests by conveying part of his land to his brother, Junius Brutus, and part to his business agent, Joseph H. Simonds.

Just a month later John was in Montreal. A great deal of testimony offered at the trial of his fellow-conspirators in May, '65, in the effort to prove Confederate complicity in the murder of President Lincoln, made it appear that John Booth, John Surratt, Lewis Payne, Davy Herold, spent much of the fall and winter of '64-'65 in Montreal. But there is no reliable evidence that Booth was there after October<sup>1</sup> — the register of St. Lawrence Hall does not once contain his name after that date — and neither is there reliable evidence that any of the other conspirators was there at all, except John Surratt, who went there in April.

St. Lawrence Hall was then the leading hotel of Montreal and was, as such, liberally patronized by actors and by those prominent Southerners who, by their authorized activity in the Confederate cause, were known as the "Canada Cabinet" of the Confederacy. John Booth knew these men well, naturally; they had many sympathies in common. His conversations with some of them were excitably described at the time of the conspirators' trial

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II: Note summarizing evidence about Booth in Canada.

as "confidential," but whatever the confidence may have been about there is not a scintilla of reliable evidence that it had anything to do with a plot against President Lincoln.<sup>1</sup>

If the men of the Canada Cabinet listened to John Booth's plans for the release of the Southern prisoners, they evidently told him nothing of their own plans to the same end. They and the "Sons of Liberty" (a secret organization of Northern Democrats who hated the war and urged resistance to the draft) had conspired to make a raid on Camp Douglas in Chicago, where nearly nine thousand rebels were imprisoned. This raid was to have occurred on the twenty-ninth of August, the day of the assembling in Chicago of the National Democratic Convention. That plan had come to nothing, owing to the Government having been forewarned. But on the night of Election Day there was to be an attack made on Camp Douglas, the intent being to release and arm the prisoners, "cut the telegraph wires, burn the railroad depots, seize the banks and stores containing arms and ammunition, take possession of the city, and commence a campaign for the release of other prisoners of war in Illinois and Indiana."<sup>2</sup> This, if successful, would rather have fore-

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix III: Note on Southern complicity.

<sup>2</sup> Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, vol. xxxix, part iii, p. 698; vol. xlv, part i, p. 1078.

stalled John's little plan, but it, too, fell through because word of it had "leaked" and the Government was prepared. The Confederacy's Canada Cabinet — or part of it, at least — had other plans, too, for ending the war in November, '64, of which John Booth does not seem to have been appraised. But of those, more presently.

In October, John was in Montreal. We know that for a certainty because on the twenty-seventh he bought at the Ontario Bank of Montreal a bill of exchange on Messrs. Glyn, Mills & Co., London, England, for sixty-one pounds twelve shillings and ten pence sterling. This left him a balance of four hundred and fifty-five dollars in the bank, where he kept a small account. He told the teller of the Ontario Bank, when he bought the bill of exchange, that he was going to run the blockade.<sup>1</sup> He never ran it, the bill of exchange was found on him when he died, just six months later, and the four hundred and fifty-five dollars were still to his credit, untouched. What he seems to have been providing against was the possibility of the Confederate Government refusing to take advantage of his "capture" and his having to flee to the British West Indies or to Europe.

John was a favourite in Montreal and always had a good

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 46, Robert Anson Campbell; p. 93, Everton J. Conger.

time there. When he played in the old Theatre Royal on Cote Street, he used to hurry away from the theatre after the performance, and make all possible haste back to St. Lawrence Hall, where he always found a little crowd of good fellows waiting for him. The billiard-room of the St. Lawrence was run by Joe Dion, the champion billiardist of America, and evening after evening he and John Booth were wont to play before an enthusiastic little "gallery" of newspaper men, actors, and men about town.<sup>1</sup> The Southern gentleman is usually a good billiard player, and without doubt the "Canada Cabinet" contributed to the "gallery" on nearly every occasion. If "conspiring" was done, it must have been in two rival camps, curiously at cross purposes.

Where John Booth was on Election Day, November 8th, we do not know, but on the evening of the next day he arrived in Washington and registered at the National Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue, not far from the Capitol. He must have been brimming full of bitterness that day over the news of Lincoln's re-election, but if he so expressed himself to any one we do not know it. He was universally known as a Southern sympathizer, but even to his closest associates, with the exception of those few he took into his plans, he seems never to have delivered himself of any

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<sup>1</sup> Told the present writer by Mr. William Jarvis of the *Montreal Star*, who was usually present at these games.

sentiments which prepared them in the least degree for the awful deed his plotting finally led him to.

It was probably on Saturday, the twelfth of November, that John went down into Charles County, Maryland, with a letter of introduction to a Dr. Queen living there. Dr. Queen's son-in-law, when examined about it months afterward, thought that the letter was from a man in Montreal named Martin. No one was able to remember the exact date of that fateful visit to Charles County, but every one agreed that it was early in November. We know that John was there Saturday — in part, at least — and Sunday and Monday morning. And we know that he left the National Hotel early on Friday morning, the eleventh, and returned early Monday evening.<sup>1</sup> If he had lived to be tried for the outcome of his plotting, the date of that first visit to Charles County would have been of sensational importance. Even as it is, the date was crucial, as we shall see.<sup>2</sup> John may have gone to Baltimore on Friday, or he may have been "prospecting around" in other parts of Charles and Prince George counties before hunting up Dr. Queen. Somewhere in the neighbourhood of Dr. Queen's house, John seems to have encountered the doctor's son, Joseph Queen, who took the stranger home.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 46, G. W. Bunker.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix IV. Note on the "Leenea" letters.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 178, John C. Thompson.



After John's letter had been presented and he had been introduced to the members of Dr. Queen's family, he told them he was in Maryland looking over farm lands with a view to purchase. He asked, also, about horses for sale in that neighbourhood.

The Queens liked him, of course; everybody liked him. And they asked him to stay with them over Sunday. He accepted, and on Sunday morning went to church with them. In the dooryard of the little country church — St. Mary's Catholic Church, near Bryantown — they met a neighbour of the Queens', Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, a young physician and a member of one of the prominent families of the county. Mr. John C. Thompson, Dr. Queen's son-in-law, introduced their guest to Dr. Mudd. It was a fateful meeting for the young physician. John — whose beauty and fame created quite a stir in the little congregation — asked Dr. Mudd if he knew of any one who had a good riding-horse for sale; and Dr. Mudd replied that his next neighbour, George Gardiner, had one, which he offered to take Mr. Booth to see.<sup>1</sup> John accepted, and on Sunday evening, just after the family and guests of Dr. Mudd had finished supper, John arrived from Dr. Queen's house, seven or eight miles away. Mrs. Mudd hospitably got a special supper for Mr. Booth — who doubtless pro-

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 71. Thomas L. Gardiner.

tested very charmingly at the trouble he was making — and after he had eaten, John joined the family circle in the parlour and remained there in general conversation until bedtime.<sup>1</sup> He stayed at Dr. Mudd's that night, and after breakfast the next morning, host and guest went over to Squire Gardiner's, a quarter of a mile away. John asked the squire for a good driving-horse, saying he desired to go about the country in a buggy and look at land. But Gardiner had only one good driving-horse, and that he would not part with. He had, though, a fairly good saddle-horse, a large, dark bay, blind of one eye, which he would sell at a bargain. John bought that, saying it would do, as he would need it for only a short time, anyway.<sup>2</sup> The horse was delivered to him at Bryantown that afternoon, and he may have ridden it into Washington, or he may not; we do not know anything more about that one-eyed horse until January, when we have trace of it in a livery stable on Sixth Street, Washington.

On Wednesday, the sixteenth of November, John went to New York, where he remained for nearly a month.<sup>3</sup> Edwin Booth and his brother-in-law, John Sleeper Clarke, the eminent comedian who married Asia Booth,

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<sup>1</sup> "The Life of Dr. Samuel A. Mudd," edited by his daughter, Miss Nettie Mudd, published by the Neale Publishing Company, New York and Washington, 1906, p. 29, Mrs. Mudd's statement.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 71, Thomas L. Gardiner.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 46, Bunker, also p. 44, Samuel K. Chester.

were then in the second season of their joint management of the Winter Garden Theatre on Broadway, opposite Bond Street. Clarke was playing his engagement there in the early fall, and Edwin was preparing his notable version of "Hamlet," with which he was to open his season on November 26th. On Friday evening, November 25th, Edwin Booth gave a performance for the benefit of the fund to raise a statue of Shakespeare in Central Park. The play selected was "Julius Cæsar," and announcements of the event promised that "the evening will be made memorable by the appearance in the same piece of the three sons of the great Booth, Junius Brutus, Edwin, and John Wilkes." Junius Brutus appeared as Cassius, Edwin as Brutus, and John Wilkes as Marc Antony. It was, so far as is known, the only occasion on which the three brothers ever appeared together, and their proud mother watched them from a stage box.<sup>1</sup>

She was a happy mother, just then, for she was seeing more of her children than at almost any other time since they were all too little to leave her.

During the performance there was a cry of fire, smoke began to fill the theatre, and the pleading of Edwin barely averted a panic in the audience of three thousand persons

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Edwin Booth," by William Winter, published by the Macmillan Company, New York, 1894, p. 34.

or more.<sup>1</sup> The Winter Garden was not on fire, but the Lafarge House, next door, was. It was one of the centres of a vast incendiary plot to burn New York City. The Astor House, the Fifth Avenue, Metropolitan, St. Nicholas, United States, Everett, Lafarge, Howard, Hanaford, Belmont, New England, St. James, and Tammany hotels, and Barnum's Museum, were prepared for destruction with phosphorus and turpentine, but the fires were, happily, soon put out. Months afterward, John Booth must needs be charged with complicity in this atrocious business — charged with bringing fire and hideous death upon the building where his idolized old mother sat beaming with pride and happiness on her three gifted boys — but he might as justifiably be charged with the burning of Rome while Nero fiddled. What is, however, unhappily almost beyond doubt, is the guilt of Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi, who had been Secretary of the Interior in Buchanan's Cabinet, and was the Confederacy's most active agent at large. In a letter of December 3rd to J. P. Benjamin, Confederate Secretary of War, Thompson lamented the failure to burn New York and admitted his complicity in the attempt. Thompson may have argued that this was in retaliation for the Dahlgren affair; but if Colonel Ulric Dahlgren, who

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<sup>1</sup> O. R. Series 1, vol. xliii, part ii, p. 934.

was killed in command of a detachment of cavalry in an unsuccessful raid on Richmond, March 4, '64, had any high Federal authority for his plan, as outlined in papers found on him, to "release the Federal prisoners on Belle Isle and in Richmond, and furnish them with oakum and turpentine to burn 'the hateful city,' while his own men were employed in killing Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet," there is no proof of it; and one can only feel that to Davis and Lee, and the real leaders of the Confederacy, the contemplated deed of November 25th, in New York, was as "barbarous and inhuman a plot" as Lee characterized Dahlgren's.<sup>1</sup> No sane historian of to-day believes that the leaders of either side were capable of such barbarian warfare; but then, in the heat of war, men believed anything of other men opposing them. New York was a wildly excited city on the morning of November 26th, and the position of John Booth in his intensely loyal household could not have been a pleasant one at breakfast that day. As a rule, politics were tabooed in Edwin's house when John was there, but it is hardly likely that the news of that morning passed without comment; that the Southerners were not charged with plotting, and that John indignantly denied it. This we may surmise, but all we know of the political talk between the brothers

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<sup>1</sup> "History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850," by James Ford Rhodes, published by the Macmillan Company, New York, vol. v, pp. 514, 515.

during that visit is that Edwin told John he had voted for Lincoln's re-election, and John said he feared that Lincoln — probably in the event of the war's successful termination — would be made "King of America."<sup>1</sup>

What John could not say he wrote. Some time during his stay in New York he wrote a long letter, which he left for safe keeping with his brother-in-law, John Sleeper Clarke:

—, —, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR: You may use this as you think best. But as some may wish to know when, who, and why, and as I know not how to direct, I give it (in the words of your master) "*To whom it may concern*":

Right or wrong, God judge me, not man. For be my motive good or bad, of one thing I am sure, the lasting condemnation of the North.

I love peace more than life. Have loved the Union beyond expression. For four years I have waited, hoped, and prayed for the dark clouds to break, for the restoration of our former sunshine. To wait longer would be a crime. All hope for peace is dead. My prayers have proved as idle as my hopes. God's will be done. I go to see and share the bitter end.

I have ever held the South were right. The very nomination of Abraham Lincoln, four years ago, spoke plainly of war — war upon Southern rights and institutions. His election proved it. "Await an overt act." Yes, till you are bound and plundered. What folly. The South was not wise. Who thinks of arguments

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<sup>1</sup> "Letters of Edwin Booth," edited by Edwina Booth Grossmann, published by the Century Company, New York, 1894, p. 237.

and patience when the finger of his enemy presses on the trigger? In a foreign war I, too, could say, "country, right or wrong." But in a struggle such as ours (where the brother tries to pierce the brother's heart) for God's sake, choose the right. When a country like this spurns justice from her side she forfeits the allegiance of every honest freeman, and should leave him untrammelled by any fealty soever, to act as his conscience may approve.

People of the North, to hate tyranny, to love liberty and justice, to strike at wrong and oppression, was the teaching of our fathers. The study of our early history will not let me forget this, and may it never.

This country was formed for the white, not for the black, man. And looking upon African slavery from the same standpoint held by the noble framers of our Constitution, I, for one, have ever considered it one of the greatest blessings (both for themselves and us) that God ever bestowed upon a favoured nation. Witness heretofore our wealth and power, witness their elevation and enlightenment above their race elsewhere. I have lived among it most of my life, and have seen less harsh treatment from master to man than I have beheld in the North from father to son. Yet heaven knows, no one would be more willing to do for the Negro race than I, could I but see a way to better their condition.

But Lincoln's policy is only preparing the way for their total annihilation. The South are not, nor have they been, fighting for the continuation of slavery. The first battle of Bull Run did away with that idea. Their causes since the war have been noble and greater far than those that urged our fathers on. Even should we allow they were wrong at the beginning of this contest, cruelty and injustice have made the wrong become the right, and they stand now (before the wonder and admi-



ration of the world) as a noble band of patriotic heroes. Hereafter, reading of their deeds, Thermopylæ would be forgotten.

When I aided in the capture and execution of John Brown (who was a murderer on our western border, and who was fairly tried and convicted before an impartial judge and jury of treason, and who, by the way, has since been made a god), I was proud of my little share in the transaction, for I deemed it my duty, and that I was helping our common country to perform an act of justice. But what was a crime in John Brown is now considered (by themselves) as the greatest and only virtue of the whole Republican party. Strange transmigration! Vice to become a virtue, simply because more indulge in it.

I thought then, as now, that the Abolitionists were the only traitors in the land, and that the entire party deserved the same fate of poor old Brown; not because they wished to abolish slavery, but on account of the means they have ever used to effect that abolition. If Brown were living I doubt whether he himself would set slavery against the Union. Most, or many, in the North do, and openly curse the Union, if the South are to return and retain a single right guaranteed by every tie which we once revered as sacred. The South can make no choice. It is either extermination or slavery for themselves (worse than death) to draw from. I know my choice.

I have also studied hard to discover upon what grounds the right of a state to secede has been denied, when our very name, United States, and the Declaration of Independence, both provide for secession. But there is no time for words — I write in haste. I know how foolish I shall be deemed for undertaking such a step as this, where, on the one side, I have many friends and every-



thing to make me happy; where my profession alone has gained me an income of more than twenty thousand dollars a year, and where my great personal ambition has such a great field for labour. On the other hand, the South have never bestowed upon me one kind word; a place where I have no friends, except beneath the sod; a place where I must become either a private soldier or a beggar. To give up all of the former, besides my mother and sisters, whom I love so dearly (although they so widely differ from me in opinion), seems insane, but God is my judge. I love justice more than I do a country that disowns it; more than fame and wealth; more (heaven pardon me if wrong) than a happy home. I have never been upon a battlefield; but, O my countrymen! could you all but see the reality or effects of this horrid war, as I have seen them (in every state, save Virginia) I know you would think like me, and would pray the Almighty to create in the Northern mind the sense of right and justice (even should it possess no seasoning of mercy), and that He would dry up this sea of blood between us, which is daily growing wider. Alas, poor country, is she to meet her threatened doom?

Four years ago I would have given a thousand lives to see her remain (as I had always known her) powerful and unbroken. And even now I would hold my life as naught to see her what she was. O my friends! if the fearful scenes of the past four years had never been enacted, or if what had been, had been but a frightful dream from which we could now awake, with what overflowing of hearts could we bless our God and pray for his continued favour. How I have loved the old flag can never now be known. A few years since and the entire world could boast of none so pure and spotless. But I have of late been seeing and hearing of the bloody deeds of which

she has been made the emblem, and would shudder to think how changed she has grown. Oh how I have longed to see her break from the mist of blood and death that circles around her folds, spoiling her beauty and tarnishing her honour! But no, day by day she has been dragged deeper and deeper into cruelty and oppression, till now (in my eyes) her once bright-red stripes look like bloody gashes on the face of heaven. I look now upon my early admiration of her glories as a dream. My love (as things stand to-day) is for the South alone. Nor do I deem it a dishonour in attempting to make a prisoner of this man, to whom she owes so much of her misery. If success attends me, I go penniless to her side. They say she has found that "last ditch" which the North have so long derided, and been endeavouring to force her in, forgetting they are our brothers, and that it's impolitic to goad an enemy to madness. Should I reach her in safety and find it true, I will proudly beg permission to triumph or die in that same "ditch" by her side.

A Confederate Doing Duty upon His Own Responsibility

J. WILKES BOOTH.<sup>1</sup>

There was only one person in all New York to whom, so far as we know, John made any mention of his plans for ending the war. That one was Samuel Chester, a member of Edwin's company, and a man John had known well for years. To Chester, John said he was not going

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<sup>1</sup> "Reminiscences of the Assassination of Lincoln," by J. E. Buckingham, doorkeeper of Ford's Theatre, pp. 53-57 (press of Rufus H. Darby, Washington, 1894); "Life of Lincoln," by Henry J. Raymond, pp. 793-796 (published by Derby & Miller, New York, 1865).

"to act in this portion of the country again; that he had taken his wardrobe to Canada, and intended to run the blockade." Chester thought John named a man, Martin, in Montreal as having charge of his theatrical wardrobe, which was a valuable one.<sup>1</sup> John told Chester he had a big speculation on hand, and invited him to go into it. Some friends who were present, joked John about his oil lands, but after he and Chester had left the others, John said he had a better thing than oil, and "one they would n't laugh at."<sup>2</sup>

Even with Chester, though, he was vague — "feeling his way." Just before he returned to Washington on the eleventh of December, John told Chester he was speculating in farm lands in lower Maryland and Virginia, and that he was "sure to coin money." He urged Chester to join with him, but Chester said he had n't any means. Whereupon John said that "that did n't matter; he would furnish the means." But he did not say further what the sensational nature of the speculation was.

He was back in Washington on Monday, the twelfth of December, and stayed until Saturday morning, the

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<sup>1</sup> In the *American Magazine* for November, 1908, Otis Skinner gives a pathetic account of the burning of that wardrobe by Edwin Booth, during the dead of a stormy winter night in 1873.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 44, S. K. Chester.

seventeenth, when he went down again to Charles County, was a guest at Dr. Queen's, and may have seen Dr. Mudd — probably did, because he went again to St. Mary's Church, which Dr. Mudd attended.

He was most anxious to learn about roads between Washington and the Potomac, and some one evidently told him that a good man for him to see would be John H. Surratt, who had done a lot of going back and forth between Richmond and Washington for the Confederate Secret Service.

John returned to Washington on Thursday, and on Friday evening he ran into Dr. Mudd on the Avenue in front of one of the hotels. The doctor and his brother Jeremiah had come to the city to do some buying.<sup>1</sup> They had arrived toward evening of the 23rd, and registered at the Pennsylvania House. After taking supper at a restaurant on the Avenue, they went about seeing the holiday sights. In the lobby of the National Hotel there was a great crowd, and when Jere stopped to speak to a friend, the brothers became separated. A few moments later Dr. Mudd was hailed on the Avenue by John, who, after a little general conversation, asked for an introduction to a young man named John Harrison Surratt, whose family had lately moved into Washington from

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 190, Jeremiah T. Mudd.

Charles County. Dr. Mudd said he was not aware that the Surratts lived in Washington, but John had the address of their new home — 541 H Street, N. W., between Sixth and Seventh — written on a card. He told Dr. Mudd that he wanted to consult with young Surratt about Maryland lands, and had been told that Dr. Mudd knew him.

Dr. Mudd said he had not time to go to H Street, as he must be at the Pennsylvania House at eight o'clock to meet some friends. But while they were talking, John Surratt came down Seventh Street toward the Avenue, accompanying his friend, Louis Weichmann, who boarded with Mrs. Surratt. Weichmann wished to buy some Christmas presents for his sisters in Philadelphia, and he and Surratt were bound on that errand when Dr. Mudd hailed Surratt, and introductions followed. The four then went, on Booth's invitation, to his room at the National, a block away, where he ordered a milk-punch apiece, and four cigars.<sup>1</sup>

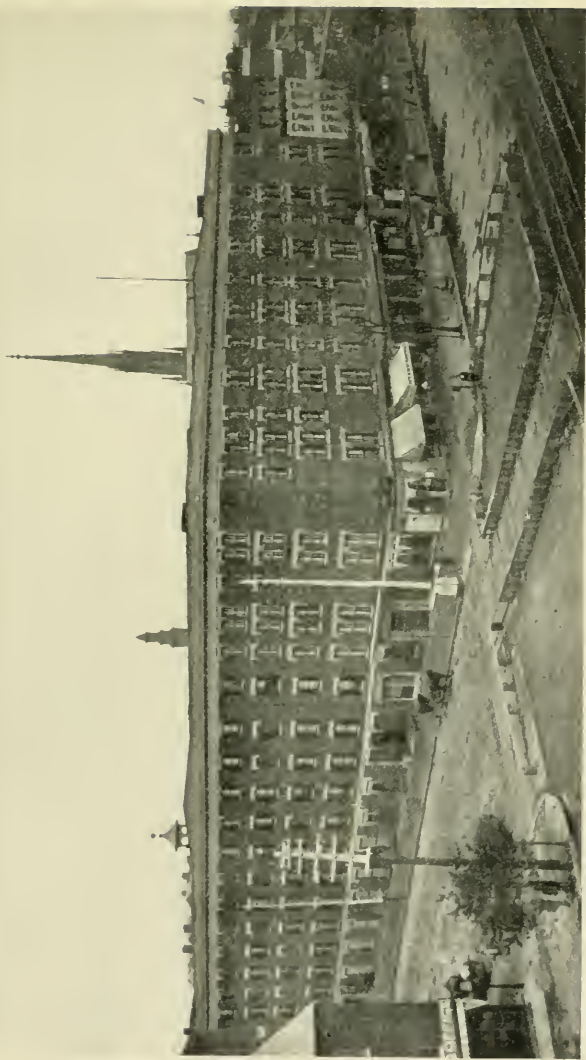
It seems that Dr. Mudd never liked Booth, never trusted him. He saw him only a few times — not more than three times before John came to his house disabled in his flight — but they seem to have been temperamentally antagonistic.

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Dr. Mudd," p. 42. Dr. Mudd's sworn statement, see Appendix V.

On this evening of the meeting in Washington, Dr. Mudd took Surratt into the passage-way outside Booth's room and apologized, he said, to Surratt for introducing to him a man he knew so little of. This was whispered in the passage, and it was what Weichmann afterward described, under oath, as "conspiring" to which he was not admitted. The rest of the "conspiracy" was when Booth, saying he had been lost when down in Charles County a few days before, took an old envelope out of his pocket and, sitting down by Surratt, began to draw roughly the location of sundry roads. The entire stay in John's room was about fifteen minutes, after which they all walked up to the Pennsylvania House, where Dr. Mudd was staying.

The next day the Mudds returned to Bryantown and Booth went over to New York to spend Christmas with his family. It was during this visit that he made his chief effort to get Chester into the plot. He called at Chester's house in Grove Street, and asked him to take a walk. They went to "The House of Lords" on Houston Street, a favourite resort of actors, and afterward for a stroll up Broadway, stopping at the Revere House, then going on as far as the corner of Bleecker Street where Chester turned to go home. Booth had not yet named his "speculation," although he had seemed on the verge



Collection of Americana, F. H. Meserve.

### THE NATIONAL HOTEL, WASHINGTON, D. C.

Booth invariably stayed here during his visits to Washington. In the passageway, outside of Booth's room, occurred the trivial incident between Dr. Mudd and Surratt which Weichmann afterward described, under oath, as "conspiracy" to which he was not admitted.

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of doing so. When Chester turned to go, John restrained him and asked him to walk up to Fourth Street where there were not so many people. When they reached the unfrequented portion of that street, John stopped and told Chester he was "in a large conspiracy to capture the heads of the Government, including the President, and to take them to Richmond." The abduction, John thought, might take place in Ford's Theatre, and some one was needed who would get employment at the theatre and at a given signal open the back door so the captors with their captured might rush quickly out. Chester refused to have anything to do with so mad a scheme.<sup>1</sup>

John Booth was back in Washington from New York on the last day of the year, and probably soon saw John Surratt, and was introduced to the pleasant household on H Street.

Mrs. Mary E. Surratt was a kind, comely, motherly woman of forty-five. As Miss Mary Jenkins she had been a belle, if not the belle, of Prince George County, Maryland. But she married very young and settled on a farm near Washington. Later, her husband, John Harrison Surratt, made some money as a railroad contractor, and purchased a place twelve miles from Washington where he kept a small tavern and discharged the duties

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 44, S. K. Chester.

of postmaster. They had three children: Isaac — who entered the Confederate army, went to the far southwest, and was not heard from for years; Anna, and John H., Jr. Mr. Surratt died in '62, and his widow kept the tavern until the fall of '64, when she rented the property to John M. Lloyd, and with her son and daughter moved into the house on H Street, where she expected to support herself by keeping boarders. One of the first of these to take up his home with her was Louis J. Weichmann, who had gone to school at St. Charles College, Howard County, Md., with John Surratt. The two boys entered and left the college at about the same time and were there three years.<sup>1</sup> John Surratt's father dying soon after he left school, young John, though but nineteen, was appointed United States postmaster in his father's place. It seems that, even while employed by the Government at Washington, Surratt must have worked for the government at Richmond which would, of course, put him in the "spy" class. But spies are as necessary in war as artillery, and as common to one side of every struggle as to the other, and we may not hold a man a villain because he serves his cause under cover. "We had a regularly established line from Washington to the Potomac," said Surratt, describing it, years afterward, "and being the only unmarried man on the

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 113, Louis J. Weichmann.

route I had most of the hard riding to do. I devised various ways to carry the despatches: sometimes in the heels of my boots, sometimes between the planks of my buggy.

. . . It was a fascinating life to me. It seemed as if I could not do too much or run too great risk.”<sup>1</sup>

Weichmann, meanwhile, had become a teacher, first in the country near Baltimore, then in the city of Washington; and in the beginning of the year '64 he was appointed to a clerkship in the War Department, in the office of the Commissary-General of Prisoners. He had visited the Surratts in their country home several times and had been delightfully treated, so that when he heard, on the occasion of his last visit there, of their intended move to Washington, he made arrangements to become a part of the family circle in the new home.<sup>2</sup> Miss Honora Fitzpatrick became a boarder at the same time; and on the seventh of February, Mr. and Mrs. John T. Holohan and their two children took the big second-story front room. Distinctly it was a household of Southern sympathies, and as such one in which many tears may well have been shed during that winter of '64-'65.

To this household came, early in January, John Booth, with his charm and his fame and his flaming purpose to right the wrongs of the South. On the twenty-ninth of

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<sup>1</sup> Rockville Lecture of John H. Surratt, December 8, 1870. See Appendix VI.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 113, Weichmann.

December John Surratt had gone to work for the Adams Express Company, but Booth seems to have persuaded him to leave, and on the fourteenth of January Surratt gave up his job and began to give his entire time and attention to the abduction plot.<sup>1</sup>

One of the first things he did was to go down to the neighbourhood of Port Tobacco, Md., where he was introduced by a man named Harborn to a carriage-painter, George A. Atzerodt. Through Atzerodt, Surratt bought of James Brawner, the hotel keeper at Port Tobacco, a lead-coloured, flat-bottomed boat which would hold about fifteen persons. This was to ferry the abductors and the President across the Potomac, and for that purpose it was kept in readiness, first at the head of Goose Creek, then at Nanjemoy Creek. Atzerodt was to do the ferrying.<sup>2</sup>

About that time, too, Edward Spangler, a rough carpenter and scene-shifter employed at Ford's Theatre, Washington, and "a man by the name of George" (probably Atzerodt, who began going frequently to Washington as soon as he joined the conspiracy) re-fitted for John Booth a small stable in the alley immediately behind Ford's

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix VII: Note on possibility of abduction.

<sup>2</sup> Statement by George A. Atzerodt made in his cell July 6, 1865, "The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln," by Osborn H. Oldroyd, owner of the Oldroyd Lincoln Memorial Collection and Curator of the House where Lincoln died. O. H. Oldroyd, Washington, 1901, p. 113.

Theatre.<sup>1</sup> The stable belonged to a Mrs. Davis, of whom it was rented for Booth by Maddox, the property-man at Ford's.<sup>2</sup> Spangler and "George" raised the roof a little to accommodate the buggy Mr. Booth wished to keep there, and put in two stalls.

This is, also, the probable date of the urgent letter Booth wrote Chester, telling him he "must come," and sending fifty dollars with injunctions to "be there by Saturday night."<sup>3</sup> This, in all likelihood, indicated an impending visit of the President to Ford's Theatre, probably to see Forrest, of whose acting he was extremely fond. But Chester did not go, although neither did he at once return John's fifty dollars.

Nothing came of the "Saturday night" possibility, and on the twenty-eighth of January Booth went to New York, where he may or may not have stayed until February 22d, when he was back in Washington.<sup>4</sup> He called again on Chester while in New York and renewed his urging that Chester join the plot. He told Chester then that he had tried to get John Matthews into it, but Matthews was very much frightened and would not join, which marked him a coward, Booth thought, and "not fit

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 75, Joseph Burroughs.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 75, James L. Maddox.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 44, S. K. Chester.

<sup>4</sup> C. T. p. 46, G. W. Bunker.

to live." Matthews was a member of the stock company at Ford's, and up to within a very short time before the murder of the President occupied that little hall-room in the Peterson house, across the street from the theatre, where Lincoln died; and there, it is quite probable, Booth often visited him, urging him to join the plot. After Chester's final refusal, in February, to have anything to do with the plot, and his return of the fifty dollars, which John said he would not have taken back had he not been short of funds, Chester heard nothing more of John Booth for a couple of months.

About the tenth of February, Sam Arnold probably came over from Baltimore; if he had been living in Washington before that date we do not know it, but on February 10th or thereabouts he and Michael O'Laughlin engaged a room with Mrs. Mary Van Tine at 420 D Street. Booth sometimes called on them there after his return to Washington, and Mrs. Van Tine thought that once there had been another man to see them.<sup>1</sup> In consequence, her room has been hectically described as "the den where the murder was hatched."

John and Anna Surratt had in New York City a young lady cousin whom they had never seen, but with whom they kept up a more or less desultory correspondence.

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 222, Mrs. Mary Van Tine.

This young lady was Miss Belle Seaman, and on the sixth of February John wrote her a letter which was, in part, as follows:

I am happy to say we are all well and in fine spirits. We have been looking for you to come on with a great deal of impatience. Do come, won't you? Just to think, I have never yet seen one of my cousins. But never fear, I will probably see you all sooner than you expect. Next week I leave for Europe. Yes, I am going to leave this detested country, and I think, perhaps, I may give you all a call as I go to New York. . . . Cousin Bell, try and answer me in a few days at least, as I would like very much to hear from you before I leave home for good. . . .

I have just taken a peep in the parlour. Would you like to know what I saw there? Well, ma was sitting on the sofa, nodding first to one chair, then to another, next the piano. Anna is sitting in a corner, dreaming, I expect, of J. W. Booth. Well, who is J. W. Booth? She can answer the question. Miss Fitzpatrick, playing with her favourite cat—a good sign of an old maid—the detested old creatures. Miss Dean fixing her hair, which is filled with rats and mice.

But hark! The door-bell rings and Mr. J. W. Booth is announced. And listen to the scamperings. Such brushing and fixing.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently John Booth was not without his fluttering admirers in the house on H Street where he had been known only about a month if the date of the letter is correct. According to the register of the National Hotel, where

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<sup>1</sup> "History of the United States Secret Service," by Lafayette C. Baker, published by L. C. Baker, Philadelphia, 1867, p. 562.

Booth invariably, so far as we know, stopped when in Washington, he was not in the city on February 6th nor at any time between January 28th and Washington's Birthday;<sup>1</sup> nor does the abduction plot seem to have promised at any time, during that interim, to come to a "head." On the other hand, John Surratt did go to New York in February. He called on John Booth at Edwin Booth's house, the elegance of which he never tired of describing to the interested group at H Street.<sup>2</sup> Whether he called also on his cousin Belle we do not know, but he probably did. He did not, however, "leave this detested country," but soon returned to Washington and, with the others, went on biding his time impatiently.

The plot at that time embraced, besides John Booth: Surratt, Sam Arnold, Michael O'Laughlin, Atzerodt, and possibly Davy Herold. Surratt was giving his entire time to the plans, with the exception of an occasional errand between Washington and Richmond for the Confederate government. O'Laughlin was doing a little business, taking orders in Washington which his brother supplied from Baltimore.<sup>3</sup> Arnold was idle, to the great disapproval of his people who thought — and reasonably

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix VIII: Note on John Y. Beall.

<sup>2</sup> "Trial of John H. Surratt," published by the Government Printing Office, Washington, 1867, vol. i, p. 375.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 232, P. H. Maulsby.



— that gay, handsome, spendthrift John Booth, with his easy ways, his multitude of acquaintances, his celebrity, his large income, and expensive tastes, was no helpful company for a boy who had only hard work to look to for a plain living. Arnold belonged in the small-salaried class, and was a youth who would probably grow old within the \$100-a-month limit; all questions of treasonable mischief aside, there was no possible good for him in loafing about Washington with John Booth. But Arnold, flattered, was loath to believe this.

Atzerodt, too, had stopped working at his trade and was waiting to achieve fortune in a single bold coup.

Davy Herold was a boy of nineteen or thereabouts whose father, recently deceased, had for twenty years been principal clerk of the store at the Navy Yard. Davy had seven sisters, and the family was of the most unquestionable gentility and good report. The only boy was a bit spoiled, but a nice boy withal. He was trifling rather than serious in disposition, fond of outdoor sport, and not at all fond of application to a humdrum business, but in no way base.

Just when he first came under the spell of John Booth we do not know, but it was probably in January, '65, through the Surratts, whom Davy knew slightly before they moved into town.

There is, as a matter of fact, very little to connect Davy

with the conspiracy. He was seen twice or thrice at the Surratts' after they moved to H Street; he was with John Surratt, Weichmann, Atzerodt, and Holohan at Ford's Theatre on March 18th, when John Booth played Pescara for McCullough's benefit;<sup>1</sup> and a half-witted negro boy who did chores for Mrs. Surratt told Weichmann that Davy was with Booth, Payne, Atzerodt, Surratt, Arnold, and O'Laughlin on the afternoon of March 16th when they attempted to capture the President. Besides these things, and the fact that Davy sometimes called on Booth at the National Hotel, and sometimes hung around the stable where Booth kept his horse, there is nothing to implicate him except with guilty knowledge, after noon of April 14th, of what was to be done that night.

After an early breakfast on the last day of February, Booth closed his account to date at the National Hotel and took the 8.15 train for Baltimore.<sup>2</sup> That was the Tuesday before Lincoln's second inauguration. In Baltimore, later in that day, Booth was standing on the steps of Barnum's Hotel when he saw a wretched-looking young fellow dragging himself miserably by. The youngster was magnificently built, with a breadth of shoulders and a bull-like thickness of neck which recalled to John Booth some one he had once seen. He called

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 115, Louis Weichmann.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 46, G. W. Bunker.

out, and the shambling young giant turned. Then John knew him. Nearly four years before, in the late spring of '61, when Richmond was full of martial stir, there had sat high up in the cheaper seats of Ford's Theatre one night a gawky, overgrown country lad, a Baptist preacher's son, who, although he was only sixteen, had hastened to enlist in the Second Florida Infantry. The lad had never been to a theatre before, and he was entranced with all he saw and heard, but chiefly with John Booth. And although he was unused to stage-doors he had found his way to the back of Ford's Theatre, and waited in the dark for his enchanter to come out. When Booth came, and the country lad stepped timidly up to speak to him, that love of being loved which was the foundation of John Booth's charm was instantly appealed to, and the brilliant young actor and the raw young recruit left the alley together, chatting pleasantly. Before the recruit went to war in Lee's army to fight in the bloodiest battles straight through to the bloodiest angle of Gettysburg, where he fell, wounded, he saw John Booth several times; but their ways never crossed again until that day in '65. In the meantime, the Florida boy had fought, had fallen, had served as a prisoner-nurse in hospitals at Gettysburg and Baltimore, had escaped and, failing to rejoin his old regiment, had

enlisted with a regiment of Virginia cavalry with which he stayed until January, '65, when he became disheartened over the Confederate cause, went to Baltimore, sold his horse — his sole possession — and started out to look for work. He had not been successful, his little funds were all gone, and when Booth met him he was deeply discouraged. His two brothers had been killed at Murfreesboro, he had not heard from home in a long time; and he felt — this boy of twenty who had spent the last four years in scenes of carnage and devastation — that life was worth mighty little to him.<sup>1</sup>

To this desperate and blindly adoring young giant, John-of-the-many-charms unfolded his wild scheme of capturing the President. And the very next evening, probably, the Florida boy, Lewis Payne, rang the bell at 541 H Street and asked Weichmann, who opened the door, for John Surratt. When told that Surratt was not in, Lewis asked for Mrs. Surratt, and she went to the hall to speak to him.<sup>2</sup> What he told her we shall never know, but it was probably this: That he was an ex-soldier of the Confederate army, a stranger newly come to Washington, and a friend of John Booth, who had told him to seek out John Surratt. This was more than enough to get the hospitality of Mrs. Surratt, and she asked the big

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 313, argument of W. E. Doster.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 114, Weichmann; p. 132, Miss Honora Fitzpatrick; p. 132, "Mrs. Holohan.

youth to stay. Supper was over and her dining-room was in some disarrangement,<sup>1</sup> so she prepared a tray which she asked Weichmann to carry up to the big stranger, who gave the name of Wood. "Wood" was quartered for the night in Weichmann's room and there he ate voraciously of the supper carried to him, and, immediately it was eaten, went to bed. In the morning when Weichman rose — or so he testified — "Wood" was gone.

On Friday evening, March 3d, Booth was in Mrs. Surratt's parlour for a while in company with John Surratt, Weichmann, and the ladies of the household. Miss Anna Surratt played the piano, they sang, probably Booth did some hugely comical "imitations," or in some other wise lent his mimetic gift to the fun of the occasion — and thus passed a happy hour or two. Then, while the evening was still young, the three men went up to the Capitol to witness the closing scenes of a memorable Congress.<sup>2</sup>

The next day Booth was at the inauguration, and afterward walked down the Avenue to the hotel with Walter Burton, the night clerk of the National, an enthusiastic Lincoln-lover who in all his association with John Booth never knew that the actor was not also a loyal admirer of the President. On the way from the Capitol

<sup>1</sup> Surratt Trial, vol. i, p. 376.

<sup>2</sup> S. T. vol. i, p. 380.

after the ceremonies Booth said nothing to dampen the ardour of his companion, nor to indicate that he had been charging so wildly about during the inaugural as to excite suspicion and even — according to some reports — to get himself briefly locked up.<sup>1</sup>

It was at this time that an incident occurred which has been related by John McCullough: Booth had returned to the National late in the day of March 1st, and was there uninterruptedly for the next three weeks. On or about the fourth of March, McCullough went over from New York, registered at the National, and went up to Booth's room, which he entered without knocking. "At the first wink," he said, "I saw Booth sitting behind a table, on which was a map, a knife, and a pistol. He had gauntlets on his hands, spurs on his boots, and a military hat of a slouch character on his head. As the door opened he seized that knife and came for me. Said I: 'John, what in the name of sense is the matter with you — are you crazy?' He heard my voice and arrested himself, and placed his hands before his eyes like a man dissipating a dream, and then said: 'Why, Johnny, how are you?' "<sup>2</sup>

On Monday, March 13th, Booth telegraphed to

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<sup>1</sup> Told the present writer by Mr. Walter Burton, night clerk of the National Hotel, Washington, in 1865, now manager of the Oxford Hotel, Washington.

<sup>2</sup> Oldroyd, p. 92.

O'Laughlin in Baltimore saying: "Don't fear to neglect your business. You had better come at once."<sup>1</sup>

That Monday evening the household of Mrs. Surratt — John excepted — was again in the parlour, passing the time with music and euchre, when the door-bell rang and Weichmann, going to the door, admitted "Wood" — this time well dressed and well groomed. When told John Surratt was not at home, he asked for John's mother to whom he gave his name as Lewis Payne. Mrs. Surratt took Mr. Payne into the parlour and introduced him to her household. He spent the evening with the family, and at bedtime was shown to Weichmann's room. Nothing was said about "Wood," and if Payne was recognized as identical with the guest of nearly a fortnight before, no comment was passed upon it. He went out after breakfast the next morning, and returned late in the afternoon. John Surratt was at home, lying on the bed in Weichmann's room, and Payne asked the man on the bed if he were Mr. Surratt. On being answered in the affirmative, Payne expressed a wish to talk privately with Mr. Surratt — or so Weichmann said.<sup>2</sup> Weichmann's attitude in the whole matter of the conspiracy is, however, so inexplicable, his testimony is so full of statements easily proved untrue, that anything attributed to

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 223, John Hapman.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 115, Weichmann.

him must be taken with reservation, and nothing he says must be credited unless it is well supported by other evidence. That particular statement about Payne's meeting with Surratt is probably true. It is probably true, too, that on returning from work in the War Department on Wednesday the fifteenth, about five in the afternoon, Weichmann found a false moustache on his table — and hid it; also that, not seeing Surratt or Payne about, he went up to the attic over his room and saw them "sitting together on the bed surrounded by spurs, bowie-knives, and revolvers," and that he went down and told Mrs. Surratt what he had seen, only to be reminded by her that, as John Surratt was in the habit of "going into the country he had to have these things as a protection." Weichmann must certainly have known that John Surratt was a bearer of secret messages for the Confederate government, going often to Richmond through the thick of Federal detectives, with despatches in his boots and elsewhere. And his knowing this — he, a supposedly loyal clerk of the War Department — is what makes us doubt his horror of the Surratt disloyalty when \$25,000 was the price on John Surratt's head. Weichmann was not so shocked by the bowie-knives, however, that he was not anxious to accompany Surratt to Ford's Theatre on a pass John Booth had



given him. But Surratt took Payne and two of his mother's boarders — Miss Fitzpatrick and little nine-year old Appolonia Dean.<sup>1</sup>

Weichmann said that toward the close of the play Booth came to the box — which was box 7, part of what was known as the President's box — and called Payne and Surratt out, talking to them excitedly. He did not say how he knew this. He also said that after Surratt and Payne brought Miss Fitzpatrick and little Appolonia home in a hack, they went away again and stayed away all night. This is probably true, for that seems a likely time for the meeting at the Lichau House whose exact date no one seems to have remembered.

What excited Booth may have been the news that on the next day there was to be a performance at the Soldiers' Home of "Still Waters Run Deep," with Lester Wallack, E. L. Davenport, and a special company including John Matthews. The President was expected to attend this performance and it was Booth's plan to lie in wait for the President's carriage as it was returning, spring from the bushes by the roadside at a lonely spot, overpower the men on the box, gag and bind them, and, turning right-about-face, drive the captured with all speed toward the Potomac at Nanjemoy Creek; there,

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 121, Miss Fitzpatrick; S. T. vol. i, p. 378, Weichmann.

on the waiting boat secured by Atzerodt, he was to be ferried across to Virginia and hurried to Richmond.<sup>1</sup> O'Laughlin had arrived in Washington in response to Booth's telegram<sup>2</sup> on Tuesday, and he was at this meeting. Arnold was there;<sup>3</sup> Surratt and Payne were there; Atzerodt was there; Davy Herold may or may not have been there.

It seems to have been a stormy meeting, whatever it was about. John Surratt says that the news of the Soldiers' Home play reached the conspirators only about three-quarters of an hour before the time appointed; if this is true, the meeting of the night before was probably that one — the date of which no one was able to remember exactly — at which John Surratt told the others that their plot was known in Washington and steps were being taken to thwart it. He said the best thing they could do would be to throw up the whole project, and every one but Booth seemed inclined to agree with him. The arch-conspirator listened in silence to the murmurs of withdrawal, and then rose, smote the table with his fist and exclaimed: "Well, gentlemen, if the worst comes to the worst I shall know what to do." Four of the six others then rose to go, one

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<sup>1</sup> John Surratt's Rockville Lecture (see Appendix VI.), Atzerodt's Statement (see Appendix XVI.).

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 223, John Hapman.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 235, Eaton G. Horner.

saying: "If I understand you to intimate anything more than the capture of Mr. Lincoln I, for one, will bid you good-bye." The others nodded their acquiescence and they put on their hats and moved toward the door. Then Booth asked pardon, disavowed any more sinister intention than the one originally agreed upon, and the meeting was resumed, to last until five o'clock in the morning. Arnold, however, said that if nothing was done that week he would withdraw from the plan entirely.

On Thursday afternoon, when the virtuous Mr. Weichmann reached home, he found nobody about. A ring of the service-bell brought from the kitchen a mulatto boy, Dan, who said that Massa John had gone horse-back riding with six or seven other gentlemen, including Mr. Booth, Payne, Atzerodt, Dave Herold, and two others Dan did n't know.

According to Weichmann's story, when he went down to dinner he met Mrs. Surratt in the hall. She was weeping bitterly and said:

"Mr. Weichmann, go down to your dinner and make the best of it you can — John is gone away! John is gone away!"<sup>1</sup>

John had probably left a note for his mother telling her that he had gone to abduct the President and would go

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 118, Weichmann.

from Richmond to Europe. Weichmann felt that Mrs. Surratt's upset condition was evidence of her complicity; whereas it looks to the unprejudiced mind as if she would, if previously aware of the plot, have by this time learned to control herself, and if she approved of it could only have rejoiced that her boy was to play a leading part in the great coup of the long, bitter war.

About half-past six, after Weichmann and the other boarders had eaten their dinner, Surratt, Payne, and Booth came one at a time into Weichmann's room, dressed as from riding, and all seemed greatly excited and disappointed. Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase had gone to the Soldiers' Home in Mr. Lincoln's stead, and as they wanted, in Surratt's words, "a bigger chase," nothing was accomplished.

According to Weichmann, it was Surratt who got home first. "My prospects are gone," he declared to Louis, "my hopes are blasted. Can you get me a clerkship? I want something to do."

In about half an hour, Weichmann says, Payne, Booth, and Surratt left the house — Payne to return there no more until the night of his arrest a month later. Then Weichmann, brimming with suspicion, went to call on Captain D. H. Gleason, a fellow clerk in the office of the Commissary-General of Prisoners. Captain Gleason was

not at home, but Weichmann told him the next day what had happened. At least, Weichmann said he did, and that they agreed things looked strange, and perhaps the Secretary of War ought to be told; but they decided after all not to tell — only “to keep an eye on them [the conspirators] and if anything again came up to report it promptly to the authorities, secure horses if need be, and pursue them.” This was a good deal of responsibility for two young men to take who were busy in a department all day long, but Weichmann says they took it. It was Captain Gleason who told the Secretary of War, after the President’s assassination, to summon Weichmann as a witness, but Captain Gleason was never himself called to the stand to say whether he and Weichmann had or had not previously conferred and decided not unnecessarily to alarm the Government.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after the fiasco of March 16th, Arnold and O’Laughlin returned to Baltimore. Arnold had hearkened to the entreaties of his family about the evils of idling, and determined to go to work. He applied for a clerkship in the store of John W. Wharton, a sutler, outside Fortress Monroe, and while waiting to hear from his application lived at home and with his brother at Hookstown, six miles in the country.<sup>2</sup> O’Laughlin returned to Baltimore

<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 119, Weichmann.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 240, William S. Arnold; Frank Arnold.

on March 18th, and went to live with his brother-in-law, P. H. Maulsby, at 57 North Exeter Street.<sup>1</sup> He had done some business for his brother in Washington on March 14th, and continued working for him after returning to Baltimore.

“Benefits” were still the order of the theatrical world — not for sick, aged, or disabled actors, as now, nor for the families of actors recently deceased, but as a regular, stipulated part of a popular actor’s income; a contract always called for so much salary and so many benefits, and on the occasions of the latter a favourite Thespian’s professional friends tendered their services to make a “big bill,” and his non-professional friends made a point of buying seats and being enthusiastically in evidence. A large share of the proceeds went to the beneficiary. On Saturday night, March 18th, John McCullough had a benefit at Ford’s Theatre, and for that benefit “the eminent young American tragedian, Mr. J. Wilkes Booth,” was announced to present his “great character of Pescara in ‘The Apostate.’” Booth had given Surratt two tickets for the performance and Surratt invited Weichmann to go with him. Atzerodt and Davy Herold were there, too, and after the play they joined the other two and Mr. Holohan at supper in an oyster bay on Seventh Street. Booth was

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 232, P. H. Maulsby.



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FORD'S THEATRE, WASHINGTON, D. C., IN WHICH LINCOLN  
WAS SHOT BY BOOTH

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ASTOR, LENOX AND  
TILDEN FOUNDATION

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not with them — he probably supped with McCullough — though he saw Herold and Atzerodt for a few moments in the restaurant next to Ford's.<sup>1</sup>

On the Tuesday following, Booth paid \$50 on account at the National Hotel and left on the 7.30 p.m. train for New York, where he stayed till Saturday morning.<sup>2</sup> On Thursday he telegraphed Weichmann at Mrs. Surratt's saying:

Tell John telegraph number and street at once.

J. BOOTH.

Mrs. Holohan, thinking the telegram might be of an urgent nature, took it to Weichmann at the War Office. Nobody knows what the telegram meant — or, if anyone knows he has never told — but Weichmann insisted it was sent to him to implicate him in the plot. And if Surratt telegraphed in reply anything about a number and street no one was able to remember it.<sup>3</sup>

On his return to Washington, Booth seems to have stopped over in Baltimore where he saw O'Laughlin but not Arnold. The latter was out at Hookstown with his brother, and though he went in to town when he heard Booth was there, it was too late to catch him. So Arnold

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 115, Weichmann.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 46, Bunker.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 118, Weichmann.

wrote to him from Hookstown on Monday the 27th as follows:

DEAR JOHN: Was business so important that you could not remain in Balto. till I saw you? I came in as soon as I could, but found you had gone to W—n. I called also to see Mike, but learned from his mother he had gone out with you, and had not returned. I concluded, therefore, he had gone with you. How inconsiderate you have been! When I left you, you stated we would not meet in a month or so. Therefore, I made application for employment, an answer to which I shall receive during the week. I told my parents I had ceased with you. Can I, then, under existing circumstances, come as you request? You know full well that the G—t suspicions something is going on there; therefore, the undertaking is becoming more complicated. Why not, for the present, desist, for various reasons, which, if you look into, you can readily see, without my making any mention thereof. You, nor any one, can censure me for my present course. You have been its cause, for how can I now come after telling them I had left you? Suspicion rests upon me now from my whole family, and even parties in the county. I will be compelled to leave home anyhow, and how soon I care not. None, no, not one, were more in favour of the enterprise than myself, and to-day would be there, had you not done as you have — by this I mean, manner of proceeding. I am, as you well know, in need. I am, you may say, in rags, whereas to-day I ought to be well clothed. I do not feel right stalking about with means, and more from appearances a beggar. I feel my dependence; but even all this would and was forgotten, for I was one with you. Time more propitious will arrive yet. Do not act rashly or in haste. I would prefer your first query, 'go and see how

it will be taken in R — d,' and ere long I shall be better prepared to be with you again. I dislike writing; would sooner verbally make known my views; yet your non-writing causes me thus to proceed.

Do not in anger peruse this. Weigh all I have said, and, as a rational man and a *friend*, you cannot censure or upbraid my conduct. I sincerely trust this, nor aught else that shall or may occur, will ever be an obstacle to obliterate our former friendship and attachment. Write me to Balto., as I expect to be in about Wednesday or Thursday, or, if you can possibly come on, I will Tuesday meet you in Balto., at B ——. Ever I subscribe myself,

Your friend,

SAM.<sup>1</sup>

This letter may have preceded or may have been in answer to a telegram of that same date which Booth sent to O'Laughlin saying:

Get word to Sam. Come on, with or without him, Wednesday morning. We sell that day sure. Don't fail.  
J. WILKES BOOTH.<sup>2</sup>

It is difficult to guess what plan this refers to, for the President was at City Point with General Grant, and there was no thought of his return by Wednesday nor for days thereafter. He had gone down the Potomac on the *River Queen*, convoyed by the little steamer *Bat*, and arrived at City Point, at the junction of the Potomac and the James, on Friday evening the twenty-fourth of March.

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<sup>1</sup> C.T. p. 235, Lieutenant William H. Terry.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 223, Edward C. Stewart.

Mrs. Lincoln and Tad were with him, and Grant was there to greet him. On Monday, Sherman came up from Goldsborough, N. C., and the President and his two leading generals had two long interviews whereat Lincoln and Sherman did most of the talking and Grant the "heaviest listening." The two generals seemed agreed that in all probability one or the other of them would have to fight another big and bloody battle, but that it would be the last. Lincoln begged to know if further bloodshed could not possibly be avoided and Sherman assured him it rested with Jefferson Davis and General Lee.<sup>1</sup>

It was an anxious time: the South was practically beaten but it had not yet bowed. The ragged, starving, desperate army of Lee had two alternatives, and two only: The Union army encircled Richmond and Petersburg, except on the west and southwest; if Lee should abandon his defence of those cities he might either join Johnston in North Carolina or retreat by way of Lynchburg into the mountains and indefinitely prolong the bloodshed of a war already ended in effect.

Lincoln felt that every life henceforth laid down in this war was a sacrifice which ought to be prevented, and it was probably his earnest pleading which hastened

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<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, vol. v., pp. 107-108; "Sherman's Memoirs," vol. ii., pp. 326-331; "Campaigning with Grant," by General Horace Porter, p. 417 (published by the Century Company, 1897).

Grant into the field on Wednesday the 29th, to begin his last, or Appomattox, campaign, the object of which was to intercept Lee's retreat toward the west or southwest, and force an early peace.

Throughout the eleven days of that campaign Lincoln sat at City Point headquarters, tensely waiting. Those were the days when he was so often seen playing with the three motherless kittens whose orphaned crying he hushed with the stroking of his big gentle hands.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Lincoln returned to Washington on Saturday, the first of April—the day Sheridan was fighting the battle of Five Forks—leaving little Tad with his father.

The next day a messenger from the War Department tiptoed down the aisle of St. Paul's Church, Richmond, where Jefferson Davis was attending service,<sup>2</sup> and handed him Lee's telegram saying: "I see no prospect of doing more than holding our position here till night. I am not certain that I can do that. If I can I shall withdraw to-night north of the Appomattox, and, if possible, it will be better to withdraw the whole line to-night from James River. . . . I advise that all preparations be made for leaving Richmond to-night."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Campaigning with Grant," p. 410.

<sup>2</sup> "Life of Jefferson Davis" by Mrs. Davis, vol. ii, pp. 655, 667; "From Manassas to Appomattox," by General Longstreet, p. 607 (published by Lippincott & Co., Phila.).

<sup>3</sup> O. R., Series I, vol. xlvi, part i, p. 1264.

That night Richmond and Petersburg were evacuated, and the next morning the Union troops marched in. Grant, hot in pursuit of Lee's army, had no time to ride victorious into the conquered capital, but Lincoln knew that if he moved expeditiously he might see his Lieutenant-General before he left Petersburg; so he telegraphed Secretary Stanton that he was going to the front to see Grant. To this Stanton hastened to reply most characteristically: "Allow me respectfully to ask you to consider whether you ought to expose the nation to the consequence of any disaster to yourself in the pursuit of a treacherous and dangerous enemy like the rebel army." This caution did not reach the President until late in the afternoon when he wired: "Thanks for your caution, but I have already been to Petersburg. Stayed with General Grant an hour and a half, and returned here. It is certain now that Richmond is in our hands, and I think I will go there to-morrow. I will take care of myself."<sup>1</sup>

Richmond was indeed in our hands. Davis with his Cabinet and his staff and other officials left their capital at eleven o'clock Sunday night, and at the time Lincoln was telegraphing Stanton as above, had reached Danville in safety. Under Lee's orders, all tobacco in the city

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<sup>1</sup> O. R., Series I, vol. xlv, part iii, pp. 508, 509.

and all stores which could not be removed were set on fire before the evacuation, and that Sunday night was marked by conflagration and rioting. By seven in the morning the Union soldiers began coming in, bands playing, banners unfurled, throats splitting with cheer on cheer.<sup>1</sup> The next day Lincoln entered most modestly, with a tiny escort, and remained over night, returning to City Point Wednesday. He found good news from Grant awaiting him, and was anxious to go forward upon the trail of that victorious general, and be present at the surrender which was now imminent. But on Thursday came from Washington the news of Secretary Seward's injury in being thrown from his carriage — he sustained fractures of the arm and of the jaw — and the President felt that he ought to get back to his post at the White House. On that day, though, Mrs. Lincoln returned to City Point accompanied by Senator and Mrs. Harlan and Senator Sumner, all anxious to go to Richmond. This delayed the return to Washington until Saturday,<sup>2</sup> and when the *River Queen* reached her dock at nine o'clock Sunday night, the President was greeted with the news of Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox that afternoon.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, vol. v, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix IX: Note on Lincoln's Last Journey.

<sup>3</sup> Col. W. H. Crook, who accompanied the President to City Point, as body guard,

Meanwhile, the fall of Richmond had been celebrated in Washington on April 3rd, with great rejoicing. And toward evening of that day John Surratt came home from the fallen capital, whither he had gone with some despatches, arriving there the night of Friday, March 31st. He was told that Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of War, wanted to see him, and he reported to that gentleman at the Spotswood Hotel where, on his agreeing to carry some despatches to Canada, he was given the despatches and two hundred dollars in gold to pay his expenses. He left Richmond Saturday morning, and arrived in Washington about four o'clock Monday afternoon. He went home, but did not stay except to change his underclothing. This he accounts for by saying that a detective had been to his house inquiring of a servant his whereabouts. He asked his chum Weichmann to go down town with him and have some oysters, and after they had eaten these in an oyster bay on the Avenue, Surratt bade Weichmann good-bye, saying he would sleep at the National Hotel that night and leave by an early morning train for Montreal.<sup>1</sup> That was the last they

relates (*Harper's Magazine*, September, 1907, p. 532) that when the carriage containing the President's party left the wharf in Washington, Sunday evening, the "streets were alive with people, all very much excited. There were bonfires everywhere. . . . We halted the carriage and asked a bystander, 'What has happened?' He looked at us in amazement, not recognizing Mr. Lincoln. 'Why, where have you been? Lee has surrendered.' "

<sup>1</sup> Surratt's Lecture. See Appendix VI.



saw of each other until more than two years later, when Weichmaun, having sworn away the life of John Surratt's mother, stood on the witness stand prepared to do the same by his heavily manacled friend in the prisoner's dock.

Booth was not at the National that night of April 3rd. He had gone to New York on Saturday, leaving word with Atzerodt to sell his horse and buggy. If he had had any scheme for Wednesday, March 29th, it fell through; and it seems highly probable that when Booth left Washington three days later it was in disgust with the whole affair. Surratt was away; Arnold had left the whole business; O'Laughlin was working in Baltimore and paid no attention to his urgent telegram of Monday; their victim was at City Point and seemed likely to stay there. So Booth went to New York, and when Surratt called on him at Edwin's house on Tuesday afternoon, he was told that John had that morning left suddenly for Boston where Edwin was acting in "Hamlet." Whether he was really out of town or not seems impossible to determine. Certainly he was in New York on Friday, for on that night he was at "The House of Lords" and was seen and talked with for the last time by a number of his actor friends playing in New York. Samuel Chester was one of these, and to him John said he had been very

close to Lincoln on inauguration day, and had had "an excellent chance to kill the President if I had wished."<sup>1</sup>

The next day he returned to Washington, and there, on Sunday night, he must have heard of Lee's surrender.

Monday evening he called at Mrs. Surratt's where he found, besides the members of the little household, a friend of the family, Miss Anna Ward, who had received a letter from John Surratt and taken it to his mother and sister to share its contents with them.

After the guests had gone, Mrs. Surratt told Weichmann it would be necessary for her to drive to Surrattsville the next day to see about some money due her from a Mr. Nothey for land purchased by him from her husband. She asked Weichmann if he thought he could get leave from his office and drive her there. This leave he obtained without difficulty on Tuesday morning when he reported at the War Department, and he then went, on Mrs. Surratt's suggestion, to John Booth at the National Hotel to ask for his horse and buggy. Booth told Weichmann he had sold his horse and buggy only the day before, but gave him ten dollars to hire one — which was very characteristic of open-handed John, who never refused any one a favour if he could possibly help it; but this helped to hang Mrs. Surratt because the prosecution contended

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 44, Chester.

Booth could not conceivably have been so courteous except for a fell purpose.

So Weichmann drove Mrs. Surratt into the country where the early spring was reigning in delicate beauty, and after Mr. Nothey had been seen and arrangements made with him they started cityward and reached home about six o'clock.<sup>1</sup> That night at the White House<sup>2</sup> Lincoln made his last public address in which he said of the seceded states now conquered that "finding themselves safely at home, it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad."<sup>3</sup> He was deeply anxious to press home upon his people, even in the first flush of their rejoicing, their sober responsibilities toward the conquered states, and he was grieved rather than gratified by any demonstrations of joy which took no account of the sorrow of the defeated, showed no sign of gentle intent toward them.

Thursday, General Grant, who had gone modestly from Appomattox to City Point, arrived in Washington and was greeted tumultuously. That night the city was *en fête*, and there were illuminations and speeches and receptions and band concerts, and everybody who was n't glad for

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 113, Weichmann.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix X: Note on Lincoln's Last Address.

<sup>3</sup> "Lincoln's Complete Works," vol. ii, pp. 672-675, edited by Nicolay and Hay, published by the Century Company, New York, 1894.

peace had at least to hold his tongue, for the Capital — notwithstanding its large disloyal population — was drunk with the joy of victory.

About half-past five that evening Michael O'Laughlin and three other young men came over from Baltimore to see the celebration — and O'Laughlin to sacrifice his life. Shortly after arriving Mike stopped in at the National to see John Booth; but John was not there.<sup>1</sup>

Nobody knows where Booth was that evening of the 13th, or that night. He was not at the National after Thursday noon, so far as any one knows. During the afternoon he dropped in at Grover's Theatre and asked Manager Hess if he were going to invite the President to the play the following night when the fall of Sumter would be celebrated.<sup>2</sup> After that we have no trace of him until about noon on Friday.

Friday morning early Mr. Burton, the night-clerk of the National, going off duty, met Davy Herold in the hall.

"Going to see Booth?" he asked the boy. Davy said he was.

"Well, I don't think he's in," said Burton, "I did n't see him come in last night, and he always stops for a chat with me before he goes to bed. But you'd better look in his room and see."

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 228-230, Early, Murphy, Henderson, et al.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 99, C. D. Hess.

Davy went to 228 and knocked, but got no response; and when the room was opened it was found to have been unoccupied. Nor was John Booth ever again seen by any one about the hotel — which disposes of the widely current story of his throwing his key on the counter about eight o'clock Friday night and announcing that there was to be "some good acting at Ford's" that night.<sup>1</sup>

At noon on Friday he sauntered up to Ford's Theatre,<sup>2</sup> on Tenth Street between E and F, where he frequently got mail, and as he came up the street in the bright April sunshine he looked so handsome that young Harry Ford could not resist a little good-natured banter about "the best-looking man in Washington."

There was one long letter for Booth that morning, and he smiled repeatedly as he sat on the steps reading it. When he had finished, some one said teasingly — John was an excellent subject to tease, quick with his retorts but always good-natured withal — "Your friends Lincoln and Grant are coming to the theatre to-night, John, and we 're fixin' to have Lee sit with them."

"Lee would never do that," John replied with spirit. "He would never let himself be paraded, like a conquered Roman, by his captors."<sup>3</sup>

Then he got up, thoughtfully, and walked away.

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<sup>1</sup> Told the present writer by Mr. Burton.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 99, H. Clay Ford.

<sup>3</sup> Told the present writer by Mr. H. Clay Ford.



PART II

THE DEED





## II

### THE DEED

THE rejoicing throughout the North on Monday the tenth of April was such as our nation had never seen and, it is to be hoped, will never see again, for only such horrors as marked four years of civil strife could bring such glad relief as the news from Appomattox.

In the morning papers was printed Stanton's order suspending the draft, stopping the purchase of military supplies, and removing the military restrictions from trade. During the day the Inman Line despatched a special steamer to carry the peace news across the ocean. Business was at a standstill, courts adjourned, houses and shops and Government buildings were decorated, flags floated from every mast, cannon were fired, bells were rung, whistles were blown, the streets of every town and village swarmed with laughing, crying, shouting people who vented their feelings according to their sorts. Bar-rooms were full and peace was toasted. Churches were full and God was praised. Prayer-meetings were held in churches. In schools, even in the marts of trade — yes,

in bar-rooms, sometimes — men broke into the universal psalm of thanksgiving: "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow." And over the western portico of the Capitol was a motto: "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

Toward nightfall illuminations and bonfires began to blaze from sea to sea — or to the uttermost limits of the telegraph — like the victory-fires of the ancient Greeks; and the air was full of songs of patriotism exultant.

This was the atmosphere to which Lincoln returned from the seat of war. This was the spirit to which he addressed that last public utterance of Tuesday evening, so full of magnanimity that Sumner thought it augured "confusion and uncertainty in the future, with hot controversy. Alas, alas!"<sup>1</sup>

On Thursday Washington went wild over the coming of Grant, the shy, silent, stooping little victor. There was a grand reception for him that night at the home of the War Secretary Stanton; and on the morrow — Good Friday — the fall of Fort Sumter, four years ago, was to be celebrated.

On Friday morning, while the President's family were at breakfast, young Captain Lincoln came home. He was twenty-two years old and less than a year out of Harvard. For the last two months he had been a member

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Charles Sumner," by E. L. Pierce, vol. iv, p. 236.

of General Grant's staff and as such with Grant at Appomattox. He had last seen his father on Monday of the week before, when he accompanied the President to Petersburg and back to City Point. That night he left headquarters to ride after Grant's army which was moving westward in two divisions, north and south of the Appomattox River, with Lee's army in between.

There was a great deal the President wanted to ask young Robert about those last days of the campaign, and particularly about the events of Palm Sunday afternoon in the sitting-room of the little McLean house at Appomattox; so breakfast was a chatty meal. Little Tad was present, and excitedly interested; he had been with his father at City Point and Richmond and he felt personally concerned in all that had gone on after he left.

After breakfast the President received Schuyler Colfax, Speaker of the House, who was to start on Saturday on a long western trip in which the President was deeply interested.<sup>1</sup> When he was gone, the President took his usual way to the War Department, following in a spirit of joy and thanksgiving the old trail he had worn for himself in some thousands of goings and comings made in tense anxiousness and in deep sorrow. Johnston's army was

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<sup>1</sup> "Lincoln and the Overthrow of Slavery," by Isaac Arnold, President (for many years before his death in 1884) of the Chicago Historical Society, p. 661. Published by Clarke & Co., Chicago, 1866.

still in the field against Sherman, and there was the possibility of another dreadful battle before the last rebel laid down his arms. It was his anxiety about this that took the President to the War Office to hunt, as usual, through the telegraph files.

While he was there something was said about his going to the theatre that evening. Stanton characterized the intention as "crazy," and in his blunt, grim way inveighed against it with all his might. But the President, who had never listened willingly to such cautionings, contending that to die once were far better than to die a thousand deaths through fear, felt sure that there could not now be any cause to be afraid. It had never seemed likely to him that any enemy could desire his death, since that would only leave his power in the hands of another; and of all those to whom any share of it might fall, he knew that none had half his mercy for the South. That Washington and, indeed, the whole North, not to mention the South, was full of his enemies he had every reason to be aware. He is even said by some to have been convinced that he would be assassinated. Others say he believed in a foreboding that he should die in the hour of his greatest triumph. If he did have that apprehension, it is quite compatible, nevertheless, with his dislike of being constantly guarded. For he was a fatalist; he believed

that what was to be, must be. "If it is to be done," he argued, "it is impossible to prevent it." So he went about his business quietly, and endured only when he must the futile guardianship of a special policeman.<sup>1</sup>

When, therefore, Stanton began again to remind him of the risk in exposing himself to a "treacherous and dangerous enemy" he humoured his iron chancellor by proposing to take as special escort Major Eckert of Stanton's office, whose strength was prodigious and whose alertness was as great.<sup>2</sup> But Stanton declined to spare Eckert from the busy War Office that evening. And, nothing daunted thereby, the President good-humouredly took his departure to the White House to preside at the regular weekly meeting of the Cabinet.

General Grant was present at that meeting, and much of the talk turned, naturally, on military affairs. The President said he thought they would hear soon of Johnston's surrender to Sherman, "for," said he, "I had last night my usual dream which has preceded nearly every important event of the war. I seemed to be in a singular and indescribable vessel, but always the same, and to be moving with great rapidity toward a dark and indefinite shore." The dream did not always prevision victory, he

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix XII: Note on Lincoln's Forebodings of Tragic Death.

<sup>2</sup> "Lincoln in the Telegraph Office," by David Homer Bates, published by the Century Company, New York, 1907, p. 366.

admitted, but "this time it must relate to Sherman; my thoughts are in that direction, and I know of no other very important event which is likely just now to occur."<sup>1</sup>

When the great subject of reconstruction was approached, the President said: "I think it providential that this great rebellion is crushed just as Congress has adjourned and there are none of the disturbing elements of that body to hinder and embarrass us. If we are wise and discreet we shall reanimate the states and get their governments in successful operation, with order prevailing and the Union established, before Congress comes together in December. . . . I hope there will be no persecution, no bloodshed, after the war is over. No one need expect me to take any part in hanging or killing those men, even, the worst of them. Frighten them out of the country open the gates, let down the bars, scare them off [throwing up his hands as if scaring sheep]. Enough lives have been sacrificed. We must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union. There is too much of a desire on the part of some of our very good friends to be masters, to interfere with and dictate to those states, to treat the people not as fellow-citizens; there is too little

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<sup>1</sup> Gideon Welles, in the *Galaxy* for April, 1872. Stanton came in as Lincoln was discussing his dream, and Lincoln stopped abruptly and said, "Let us proceed to business." Arnold, p. 429.

respect for their rights. I do not sympathize in these feelings.”<sup>1</sup>

He was said by Stanton to have been “more cheerful and happy” that morning than he had ever seen him. “He rejoiced in the near prospect of durable peace at home and abroad, and manifested in marked degree the kindness and humanity of his disposition and the tender and forgiving spirit that so eminently distinguished him.”<sup>2</sup>

While the Cabinet meeting was in session a White House messenger went to Ford’s Theatre with word that the President and Mrs. Lincoln, accompanied by General and Mrs. Grant, would occupy the state box that night.<sup>3</sup> The box tendered by Grover’s Theatre for that same gala night was also accepted and given to little twelve-year old Tad to entertain a party of his friends.

Early in the afternoon, however, it became apparent to General Grant that he could get away from his duties in Washington quite as well on Friday as on Saturday, and as he and Mrs. Grant were impatient to get to Burlington, N. J., to see their daughter Nellie, who was at school there, they excused themselves to Mrs. Lincoln and prepared to take the six o’clock train for Phila-

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<sup>1</sup> Welles, in the *Galaxy*.

<sup>2</sup> Stanton’s letter to Charles Francis Adams, United States Minister to Great Britain; the letter is dated April 15th, 11.40 A.M. O. R. Series I, vol. xlv., part iii., p. 785.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 100, James R. Ford.

delphia.<sup>1</sup> In their stead, Mrs. Lincoln invited Miss Clara Harris, daughter of Senator Ira Harris, of New York, and her fiancé, Major Henry Rathbone. The White House carriage, she sent word, would call for the young people a little after eight.

In the early afternoon,<sup>2</sup> the President and Mrs. Lincoln went for a long drive out in the direction of the Soldiers' Home. Washington was very beautiful just then, with that mid-April beauty of hers which seems to be quite unapproachable. The dogwood and the lilacs were in bloom, the bright green, plumey willows swished softly on the banks of the shining Potomac, the air was redolent of sweet scents and warm with the breath almost of summer. The capital looked very gay, with its fluttering flags and its gay buntings, but the country looked even sweeter to this tired man who was the centre of the nation's joy. He talked to Mrs. Lincoln of what they would do when this term of office was over and they could take up a quiet life again. "We have saved some money," he said, "and ought to be able to save some more. And with that and what I can earn from my law practice, we can settle down in Springfield or Chicago, and live cozily to a green old age."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Grant's "Memoirs," vol. ii., p. 508.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendices XII and XIII.

<sup>3</sup> Arnold, p. 661.





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MRS. ABRAHAM LINCOLN



When they returned from the drive the President saw, as they approached the portico of the White House, a group of gentlemen leaving and starting across the lawn to the east. Among them was Richard Oglesby, War Governor of Illinois.

"Come back, boys, come back!" the President shouted, waving his long arm in emphatic invitation.

They came back, and went with him upstairs to his office, and there stayed, laughing and talking and swapping stories and listening to him read from a book of humour he was enjoying, until he had to be thrice summoned to dinner.<sup>1</sup>

After dinner, Speaker Colfax called again and brought with him Mr. Ashmun of Massachusetts. These gentlemen were shown into one of the parlours and talked briefly with the President. While they were there the card of Senator Stewart of Nevada was brought in. The Senator had taken a friend, Judge Searles, to call on the President, and in about five minutes the usher came back with a card from Mr. Lincoln who had written:

I am engaged to go to the theatre with Mrs. Lincoln. It is the kind of an engagement I never break. Come with your friend to-morrow at ten and I shall be glad to see you.

A. LINCOLN.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Lincoln," by Ida M. Tarbell, vol. iv., p. 31. Published by the McClure Company, New York, 1900.

<sup>2</sup> "Reminiscences of Senator William M. Stewart," published by the Neale Publishing Company, 1908, p. 190.

At the door of Captain Lincoln's room, which was over the entrance, the President had stopped as he went downstairs and said: "We're going to the theatre, Bob, don't you want to go?"<sup>1</sup>

But Captain Robert had not slept in a bed for nearly two weeks, and he said that if his father did not mind he would rather stay at home and "turn in early." His father did not mind at all, and they parted with cheery "good-nights."

Mr. Ashmun was disappointed at the short time he had with the President, and Mr. Lincoln urged him to come back in the morning. "Come as early as nine, if you will," he said. And lest there be any difficulty about gaining admittance an hour before the official day began, the President stopped at the door as he was going to his carriage, picked up a card and wrote on it:

Allow Mr. Ashmun and friends to come in at 9 A.M. to-morrow.

A. LINCOLN.<sup>2</sup>

This he gave Mr. Ashmun as he bade him good-night. Outside, on the broad stone flagging beneath the portico, as the President went out to hand Mrs. Lincoln into their carriage, were Senator Stewart and Judge Searles. The judge was introduced, spoke briefly to

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<sup>1</sup> Related to the present writer by Mr. Robert Lincoln.

<sup>2</sup> Tarbell "Lincoln," vol. iv., p. 32. See Appendix XIV: Note on George A. Ashmun.

the President, and in a minute the carriage drove rapidly away.

The young sweethearts were in festive mood at the evening's prospect, and the President responded to it with much happiness in their care-free company.<sup>1</sup>

The play of the evening was Tom Taylor's eccentric comedy, "Our American Cousin," which Miss Laura Keane had put on in her New York theatre in 1858, scoring immediate success not only for herself but for Mr. Joseph Jefferson and Mr. E. A. Sothorn of her company, each of whom laid the foundation of fame and fortune in their rendition of the rôles of Asa Trenchard and Lord Dundreary, respectively. In the intervening years the play had continued to be a tremendous favourite, Sothorn playing it here and abroad as "Dundreary," Jefferson taking it to Australia and South America, and Miss Keane playing it nearly a thousand times in the United States. She was appearing in it in Chicago in June, 1860, during the sessions of the Republican Convention, and on the night of Lincoln's nomination most of the delegates went to see her.<sup>2</sup>

The company at Ford's was, in accordance with the custom of the times, a resident stock-company, and travelling stars came from time to time to play with it. Miss

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<sup>1</sup> Told the present writer by their son, Mr. Henry R. Rathbone, of Chicago.

<sup>2</sup> Chicago *Tribune*, June 19, 1860. Also, Appendix XV: "Our American Cousin."

Keene was fortunate in having a benefit that night, although it was Good Friday, ordinarily the poorest night in the theatrical year; for in addition to the advertised presence<sup>1</sup> of the President and "lady" and General Grant and "lady," the town was full of strangers bent on entertainment.

At ten o'clock that Good Friday morning there was read in the office of the Commissary-General of Prisoners a letter from the Secretary of War granting a holiday to all employees whose churches had divine service on that day. One of the promptest to take advantage of that permission was Louis Weichmann, who attended service at St. Matthew's Church, remaining until 12.30, when he joined the H Street household at luncheon.<sup>2</sup>

At two o'clock or thereabouts, as he was sitting in his room, Mrs. Surratt came to the door, knocked, and told him she had another letter imperatively requiring her immediate presence at Surrattsville; she asked him if he would be willing to drive here there again. The young department clerk was delighted at the opportunity to get out into the country on this beautiful afternoon, and he took the ten dollars that Mrs. Surratt gave him to hire a horse and buggy, and went at once to Howard's stable on G Street.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Washington Star*, April 14, 1865.

<sup>2</sup> *S. T.* vol. 1, p. 390, Weichmann.

<sup>3</sup> *C. T.* p. 113, Weichmann.

# FORD'S THEATRE

TENTH STREET ABOVE R.

SEASON II. WEEK XXXI... NIGHT 191

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JOHN T. FORD PROPRIETOR AND MANAGER  
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## THIS EVENING

The Performance will be honored by the presence of

**PRESIDENT LINCOLN**

# BENEFIT

-AND-

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OF MISS

# LAURA KEENE

THE DISTINGUISHED MANAGERS, ACTRESS, and ACTRESS

Reported by  
**MR. JOHN DYOTT**

AND  
**MR. HARRY HAWK**

TOM TAYLOR'S CELEBRATED ECCENTRIC COMEDY  
 As originally produced in America by Miss Keene and performed by her  
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**OUR AMERICAN**

# COUSIN

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Mr. Cory, Attorney	J. MATTHEWS
Lieutenant Vernon, R. N.	W. J. FERGUSON
Captain De Roubert	C. EYREMAN
Bulmer	O. G. SPEAR
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John Walker & Gardiner	J. L. DUBOIS
Ranger & Growth	G. A. PARKHURST and J. JOHNSON
Salute	Miss J. GOURLAY
Mary Trenchard	Mrs. H. MUEY
Mrs. Montchomery	Miss H. TRUEMAN
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As he was opening the front door of the Surratt house to go down the steps, he encountered John Booth standing with his hand on the bell in the act of ringing. The two men exchanged greetings, and Booth entered the parlour, Weichmann going on about his errand. When he returned, Booth was just leaving, and in a few minutes Mrs. Surratt and Weichmann started on their two-hour drive to Surrattsville. Before leaving, however, Mrs. Surratt exclaimed: "Oh, wait! I must get those things of Booth's."<sup>1</sup> She returned to the house and brought out a small package which she put in the bottom of the buggy.

After leaving Ford's at a little after noon, Booth went (probably) to the Kirkwood House, now the Raleigh, at Twelfth Street and the Avenue, and sent up to Vice-President Johnson's room a card on which he had written:

Don't wish to disturb you; are you at home?

J. WILKES BOOTH.<sup>2</sup>

At any rate, such a card, in Booth's writing, was sent up to the Vice-President's room some time previous to five o'clock, and was returned to the office, as Mr. Johnson was not in. Instead of being put in Johnson's box in the office, it was put by mistake into the next box, which was that of his private secretary, William A. Browning. Mr.

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<sup>1</sup> S. T., vol. i, p. 391, Weichmann.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 70, William A. Browning.

Browning got the card about five o'clock and thought it had been left for him, as he had a slight acquaintance with Booth. Whether Booth left the card, or whether he wrote it and Atzerodt left it, no one could say. Booth must have known the Vice-President would hardly be in his room at that time of day, so what he hoped to gain by sending the card is difficult to guess. Perhaps Atzerodt, who took a room at the Kirkwood about one o'clock that day, was given the card and told to send it — possibly to implicate Johnson in the crime Booth had just decided to perpetrate that night; possibly to determine for Atzerodt that the Vice-President was out and so make him feel free to explore the neighbourhood of Johnson's room. This latter assumption is ridiculous, however, for Atzerodt was a guest of the hotel and could have prowled about the Vice-President's room all he wished without exciting suspicion, and in the event of his discovering by this elaborate ruse that Johnson was out (which he could easily have done without giving his name or Booth's) he could do no more than that. There is a mystery in that card which has never been cleared, and perhaps never will be.

After leaving the Kirkwood (if he went there) Booth dropped into Grover's Theatre for a few minutes and chatted with Mr. C. D. Hess,<sup>1</sup> the manager, and with Mrs.

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 99, C. D. Hess.

Hess and her sister, who happened to be present. It was he who told Mr. Hess that the President was going to Ford's that night, and therefore would not occupy the box at Grover's tendered him to see Lester Wallack and E. L. Davenport. Some time during the lunch hour, vaguely described by everybody as "about noon," Booth went to Pumphrey's stable on C Street, back of the National Hotel, and hired a horse, for which he said he would call at 4.30.<sup>1</sup> Then, apparently, he went up to Mrs. Surratt's, and left there about half-past two.

Two coloured women living in the alley back of Ford's Theatre said they saw Mr. Booth in the alley during the afternoon. One said it was between two and three o'clock, the other did not remember the time; but as coloured people of their class are notoriously "wild" in all their estimates of time and dates, nothing can be argued therefrom. Both of them were sure, though, that he was "talking to a lady," and one of them said "he and this lady were pointing up and down the alley as if they were talking about it." She added that she knew it was Mr. Booth because she remembered looking "right wishful at him."<sup>2</sup> The lady might have been Miss Keene, who probably rehearsed with the resident company during the day, and would have been particularly likely to do so

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 72, James W. Pumphrey.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 75, Mary Ann Turner, Mary Jane Anderson.

after hearing of the distinguished guests who were expected.

Ferguson, keeper of one of the restaurants which flanked the theatre on either side, also saw Booth in the alley during the afternoon, but testified that he was talking to Maddox, the property-man of the theatre.<sup>1</sup> The time was probably between 4.30 and 5, after Booth had got his horse from Pumphrey's and brought it to his stable in the alley back of Ford's. Edward Spangler, the scene-shifter and rough carpenter who helped to fix over the stable for Booth in January, and who did chores thereabouts for the actor, took the horse, and on being asked for a halter sent Jake Ritterspaugh, another scene-shifter, to get a rope from the theatre. Spangler wanted to take the saddle and bridle off the horse, but John told him not to; Spangler, however, did take them off when Mr. John was gone.<sup>2</sup>

After putting up the horse, John went with Maddox, Spangler, the stage-door keeper named John Burroughs and nicknamed "Peanuts," and another young man, into one of the restaurants next the theatre, and each took a drink. Between that time and eight o'clock in the evening we have no absolute knowledge of John Booth's movements, but he was probably in the auditorium of Ford's Theatre for a while — possibly between 5.30 and 6 when

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 76, James P. Ferguson.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 74, Joseph Burroughs.

most of the theatre employees would be at their early dinner.

Now to go back a little: Not long after John's departure from the theatre at the noon hour, young Harry Clay Ford — Mr. John T. Ford's twenty-year-old brother — who was treasurer of the theatre, spoke to Thomas Raybold, the purchasing agent of the house, about decorating the President's box. Mr. Raybold was suffering from a neuralgic stiff neck that day and was not able to do any active work in decorating, but he advised and directed, and Mr. Harry Ford did the actual labour with the assistance of Spangler and "Peanuts."

There were two American flags which had been used on other occasions to decorate the state box, and in addition to these it was decided — since General Grant was expected to attend — to send to the Treasury Department and borrow the Treasury regimental flag, a blue flag with white stars. This was draped in the centre of boxes 7 and 8 and the American flags were disposed above; on the pillar in the middle a framed picture of Washington was hung.<sup>1</sup>

The two boxes thrown into one for the President's use by the removal of the partition between them, were balcony boxes on the right-hand side of the house facing the stage. (And right here is a good place to remind readers unused

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 99, 110, H. Clay Ford, Thomas J. Raybold.

to theatre terminology that people habitually in the front of the house speak of the stage right and left as the playgoer would — and as he sees them — while those who habitually see the theatre from the other side of the footlights mean, of course, exactly the opposite when they say right or left. The President's box was on the right as the audience sat, on the left or "opposite prompter" side in the players' and stagehands' parlance.)

The boxes were reached in this way: On entering the main door, near the south end of the theatre on Tenth Street, one traversed a lobby the whole width of the theatre to its north end, ascended a stairway, passed along an upper lobby to the extreme south of the building again, and went down the outside aisle to the door of the right-hand private boxes. This door opened into a small passage-way behind the two boxes, and into each of the boxes there was, instead of the portières now common for that use, a door which locked, and which was kept locked when the box was not in use; the key to it was kept by the usher. The first door was at the left of persons entering the passage; the second was facing them.

The ordinary chairs were removed that day, and in their place were put some crimson velvet easy chairs out of the reception-room, a chair and a sofa from the property-room on the stage, a large rocker that belonged to the

reception-room set, but which Mr. Harry Ford had removed to his bedroom on the third floor of the connecting building on the south; the room under Mr. Ford's bedroom was the reception-room, opening into the dress-circle or first balcony.

Mr. Ford had sent the rocker upstairs because the ushers of the dress circle used to sit on it when not busy, and "had greased it with their hair." Joe Simms, a coloured boy who worked "on the flies" went up to Mr. Ford's room, on his order, and brought the chair down. It being the most comfortable chair available, it was set in the corner of the box the President would inevitably occupy, farthest from the stage and nearest to the audience. Then the other furniture was arranged by Mr. Ford, the sofa at the end of the box nearest the stage, the other chairs between that and the rocker.<sup>1</sup>

It was about three o'clock when these preparations were complete. Spangler and "Peanuts" attended solely to the removal of the partition, and while they were working at their job Spangler — so "Peanuts" testified — said: "Damn the President and General Grant." Asked why he damned "a man that had never done any harm to him," he said "he ought to be cursed when he got so many men killed."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 99, H. C. Ford.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 74, Burroughs.

When everything was in readiness the men left the box, and the auditorium lapsed again into that ghostly stillness of the theatre in daytime — the shadowy reaches of it full of phantom forms, the intense silence of it loud with echoes of dead eloquence.

Then into the draped and decorated box stole a man! God knows who the man was — no one else does know.

The man stooped down and “sighted” for the elevation of a tall man’s head above the top of the rocker, and on a line with that elevation he cut in the door behind the chair a hole big enough to admit the passage of a bullet; the hole was apparently bored with a small gimlet then cut clean with a sharp penknife. This was, presumably, in the event of the assassin getting into the passageway behind the boxes, but finding the doors to the boxes locked for the distinguished occupants’ safety. It was, however, an unnecessary preparation, for the lock on box 8 (in which was the President’s chair) had been burst on March 7th, when some late comers found their seats occupied and were shown by Mr. Raybold to this box, the key of which had been taken away by the usher after the first act. So Mr. Raybold burst the lock.<sup>1</sup>

Another thing the man did was to set one end of a bar of wood three feet six inches long against the inside of

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 109, 111, Thomas J. Raybold, Henry E. Merrick, James O’Brien.



the outer door, and cut to fit the other end of it a mortise in the plaster of the passage-way. This mortise was cut by some sharp instrument, the plaster removed was taken carefully away (probably in a paper which had received it as it fell), the brace was set in an obscure angle behind the door — and the job was done! There was no lock on the outer door, and this brace must be the assassin's sole protection against interference from the house until his deed was done and his leap accomplished.<sup>1</sup>

Edward Spangler was suspected of this preparation, but the job looked less like a carpenter's than like the work of some one who had no kit of tools. There was a gimlet found in Booth's trunk at the National next day,<sup>2</sup> but he was not at the National after this work was done, if it was done Friday afternoon. It may possibly have been done earlier, when the abduction plan was uppermost and Ford's Theatre was considered a likely place from which to make the seizure. No one knows; but the hole in the door was said to look as if very recently done, and the probability is that Booth himself did the work that afternoon between five and six o'clock.

Somewhere about one o'clock Atzerodt and Davy Herold went to Naylor's stable, Atzerodt taking a dark-

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 77, 78, 82, 111, James J. Gifford, Major Henry E. Rathbone, Isaac Jacquette, Judge A. B. Olin, Thomas J. Raybold, Joseph T. K. Plant.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 112, Bunker.

bay mare which he had just hired from Keleher's stable at Eighth and E streets, a few squares away. Atzerodt said he wanted to put the mare up. Herold engaged a horse which he said he would call for at four o'clock. At 4.15 Herold got his horse and left, saying he would be back by nine. At half-past six Atzerodt called for his mare and rode her until 7.15, when he returned her to Naylor's, asking, however, that she be kept saddled and bridled until ten.<sup>1</sup> At 7.30 he went to an oyster bay for supper and was summoned thence by some messenger of Booth's who knew his haunts<sup>2</sup>—probably Davy Herold. Booth was at the Herndon House (where Lewis Payne had been rooming since March 27th.<sup>3</sup>), and there, doubtless in Payne's room, he had at eight o'clock a meeting of conspirators. Payne was there, and he was "told off" for the assassination of Secretary of State Seward. Atzerodt was there, and he was assigned to despatch the Vice-President Davy Herold may have been there<sup>4</sup>—probably was. John Surratt was not there,<sup>5</sup> he was in Elmira, N. Y. Arnold was not there,

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 83, John Fletcher.

<sup>2</sup> Atzerodt's statement, see Appendix XVI.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 154, Mrs. Martha Murray. Payne told Mrs. Murray, whose husband kept the Herndon House, that he was going to leave about four o'clock, April 14th; probably in the hope of establishing an alibi. But Atzerodt swore Payne was at the Herndon at eight o'clock and after, and Payne seems to have told his counsel he was. C. T. p. 314.

<sup>4</sup> Atzerodt does not mention Herold as present.

<sup>5</sup> Surratt Lecture, see Appendix VI: Note on John Surratt's Trial, see Appendix XVII.

he was clerking at Fortress Monroe.<sup>1</sup> O'Laughlin was not there; he was in Washington for the celebration, but he was fully accounted for all through the evening by many witnesses.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Surratt was not there; she did not return from the country until 8.30, and was not out of the house after that.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Mudd, of course, was not there; he was not in Washington.<sup>4</sup> And Edward Spangler was not there; he was busy at the theatre.<sup>5</sup> So far as we know, only Booth and Payne and Atzerodt were present. Payne agreed to do the deed apportioned to him. Atzerodt refused to do the deed he was told to do, and was reviled by Booth, who called him a fool and said he would "be hung anyway." "And so," said Atzerodt, "we parted." Atzerodt then went to an oyster bay on the Avenue above Twelfth Street, where he stayed until about ten o'clock.<sup>6</sup>

This left only Booth and brawny young Lewis Payne to strike for what they believed "the cause." We can imagine the scene as John Booth, with frenzied eloquence, urged his few followers to their respective parts in his

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. 234, 240, 241, Eaton G. Horner, William S. Arnold, Frank Arnold, John W. Wharton.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. pp. 228, 232, Early, Murphy, Henderson, Loughran, Grillet, Purdy, Fuller, Giles.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 116, Weichmann.

<sup>4</sup> C. T. p. 200, Thomas Davis.

<sup>5</sup> C. T. pp. 105, 109, James, Debonay, Gifford.

<sup>6</sup> Atzerodt's statement, see Appendix XVI.

awful plans — probably quoting for them the lines he so often spoke as Cassius:

. . . How many ages hence,  
Shall this our lofty scene be acted o'er,  
In states unborn, and accents yet unknown?

Atzerodt, listening unmoved, sullen — personal safety his only thought; and Payne, the young gladiator, dogged, determined, caring little for fame but everything for his adored John Booth and much for the lost cause of his Southland; and Davy Herold, if he was there, probably excited — he was an excitable boy and would have been appealed to by the danger and daring of the thing and the mad flight for life which he was to share.

The play was well under way when the Presidential party got to the theatre. The scene on the stage as they entered represented the after-dinner hour in an English country house. The drawing-room was full of voluminously crinolined ladies whose ennui had just been relieved by the arrival of the gentlemen from their post-prandials in the dining-room. Miss Keene, as Florence Trenchard, was trying to explain a joke to the dull Dundreary. "Can't you see it?" she asked. No; he could n't. "You can't see it?" No. There was a slight commotion as she spoke, and as Dundreary assured her for



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### LAURA KEENE

Who was making her last appearance in Washington, in "Our American Cousin," presented at Ford's Theatre on the evening Lincoln was assassinated.

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the second time that he could n't "see it," she looked up and saw the Presidential party entering the state box. "Well, everybody can see *that!*" she said, quickly improvising and looking meaningly at the Chief Executive as she made a sweeping curtsey.<sup>1</sup> Then the orchestra struck up "Hail to the Chief," the audience cheered and cheered, and for several moments the play was at a standstill, while Mr. Lincoln bowed and smiled his appreciation of the ovation.

When the party sat down, Mrs. Lincoln was on the President's right; Miss Harris next to her on her right; and nearest to the stage, sitting on the end of the sofa, was young Major Rathbone.<sup>2</sup>

During the next two hours the President moved from his seat but once, and that was to rise and put on his overcoat. The night was warm; no one else seemed to feel any chill; but something that did not strike the bared shoulders of the ladies in the box, made the tall, gaunt man in black broadcloth shiver — and he got up and put on his overcoat.

Between 9.30 and 10 John Booth appeared at the stage-door leading his horse which he must have had to

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<sup>1</sup> Told the present writer by Mr. George C. Maynard, then of the War Telegraph Office, now of the National Museum, who made a note of Miss Keene's interpolation on his programme at the time.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 78, Major Rathbone. See Major Rathbone's statement, Appendix XVIII.

saddle for himself, since all the theatre hands were busy at their respective posts. At the door he saw J. L. Debonay, who played what was called "responsible utility" at the theatre, taking the part that night of John Wigger, the gardener. To Debonay, John said: "Tell Spangler to come to the door and hold my horse." Debonay went across the stage to Spangler's position, which was on the same side with the President's box, while the stage-door was at the "prompt side," and said to Spangler: "Mr. Booth wants to see you." Spangler went to the stage door and explained to Mr. Booth that he could not hold his horse because Mr. Gifford, the stage-carpenter, was out in front and had left the responsibility of the next change on Spangler. "Tell Peanut John to come here and hold this horse," Spangler called to Debonay, "I have n't time." So Debonay called Peanuts, who was on duty at the stage door. Peanuts objected that he had his door to tend, but Spangler said it would be all right to hold the horse, but if there was anything wrong about it to lay the blame on him. Peanuts had a bench in the alley by the door, and as he sat there on guard he held the bridle-rein of Mr. Booth's horse.

When he had left the horse in charge of Peanuts, John Booth went on the stage and inquired of Debonay if he





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could cross it. Debonay said No; the dairy scene was on, and he would have to go down under the stage and come up on the other side. This Booth did, Debonay going with him under the stage, through the little side passage on the south end of the basement floor, and out on to Tenth Street.<sup>1</sup>

Now, Booth knew perfectly the situations of the play in progress — knew that in the second scene of the third act there was a brief time when only Asa Trenchard was on the stage and few of the other players were in the wings awaiting cues. This was his time to strike, and it occurred about twenty minutes past ten.

After the curtain went up on the third act, Booth stepped to the front door where Buckingham, the door-keeper — his attention being directed for the moment to something in the house — had placed his right arm as a barrier across the doorway so that none might pass without his knowledge. Some one came up behind him, took two fingers of that hand and shook them, and Buckingham turned to look. It was Mr. John, smiling his boyish smile. "You don't want a ticket from me, do you?" he asked jocularly. And Buckingham smiled back at him and said he "guessed not" — just as he would have said to young Harry Ford.

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 74, 81, 105, Burroughs, John Miles, J. L. Debonay.

Booth went into the house, looked around, and came out almost immediately. When he returned to the door, Buckingham was talking to some out-of-town acquaintances who were in the audience, and when the distinguished young tragedian passed him the popular doorkeeper halted him and introduced his acquaintances, to whom, even in that awful hour, John made some genial remarks.

He seems to have hovered about the door, nervously, for a quarter of an hour or more. Once he asked Buckingham the time; once he asked for a chew of tobacco and was accommodated. About ten minutes past ten he went into the restaurant on the south and took a drink of whisky, came quickly out, passed Buckingham at the door, humming a tune as he went, ascended the stairs to the dress circle, and walked down along the south wall of the theatre close to the entrance of the President's box.<sup>1</sup>

One or two persons said they saw him standing there. One man (Captain Theodore McGowan) actually thought he saw Booth take out a visiting-card and hand it to the "President's messenger";<sup>2</sup> he so testified at the conspiracy trial. There was, of course, no sentry at the door; no one was there. John Parker, who had gone to the theatre

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 73, John E. Buckingham. Buckingham's book, p. 13. Also Mr. Buckingham's statements to the present writer.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 78, Captain McGowan.

as the President's guard, had left his post at the door to the passage-way, and gone to a seat in the dress circle, whence he could better see the play. Booth had no one to elude, no one to make pretext to; his movements were entirely unchallenged. The play waxed funnier and funnier, more and more absorbing. Every eye in the house was fixed otherwise than on that door — every eye but John Booth's.<sup>1</sup>

On the stage, there was a tart dialogue going on between Asa Trenchard and a designing old woman, Mrs. Mountchessington, who presently flounced off with a taunt about Asa's unaccustomedness to society.

"Society, eh?" said Asa, looking after her. "Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside out, you darned old sockdolaging man-trap!"<sup>2</sup>

Shouts of laughter greeted this characteristic defence of "Our American Cousin," and while they were rolling across the footlights there mingled with them a sharper sound — a pistol report. Booth had stepped into the passage-way, dropped the bar of wood in place to hold the door against ingress, entered the box and, shouting "*Sic semper tyrannis*," fired a Deringer pistol a few inches from the President's head. For a second or two the audience

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<sup>1</sup> "Lincoln's Last Day," by Colonel W. H. Crook, *Harper's Magazine*, September, 1907, p. 527.

<sup>2</sup> Statement of Harry Hawk (Asa Trenchard), see Appendix XIX.

thought the shooting was behind the scenes, a part of the play; not an eye turned toward the state box where Major Rathbone was grappling with the assassin. Booth had dropped his pistol when it was fired and drawn a large knife with which he slashed Major Rathbone, striking for his breast but gashing instead the left arm which the major thrust up to parry the blow. Notwithstanding his wound, the major grabbed at the assassin as he was preparing to leap from the box to the stage fourteen feet below, but he was unable to hold him. All this happened in far fewer seconds than it takes to tell it, and almost before any one could realize that there was something wrong, Booth had jumped and fallen, his left leg doubled under him, was instantly up again and running across the front of the stage. Almost simultaneously, Mrs. Lincoln's heart-rending cry rang out and Major Rathbone shouted "Catch that man!" But, for a paralyzed moment, no one stirred.<sup>1</sup>

Impeded in his jump — which ordinarily would have been nothing to one of his athletic training — by Rathbone's clutch, Booth had caught his spur in the Treasury flag, gashed the frame of Washington's picture, and broken the small bone of his left leg in the heavy fall. But he was

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 76, 78, 79, Ferguson, Withers, Stewart. Statements of Major Rathbone and Miss Harris before Judge Olin, April 17th, see Appendix XX. "Diary of Booth," see Part III., p. 132.



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THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN AT FORD'S THEATRE  
WASHINGTON, D. C., APRIL 14, 1865  
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down scarcely an appreciable moment, and before any one in the house or on the stage could realize what he had done, he had reached the prompt entrance and was running through the cleared passage leading to the stage door.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the spectators, when they got to thinking about it afterward, felt sure Booth stopped in the centre-front of the stage, brandished his dagger, and yelled "The South is avenged!" Some thought he shouted "*Sic semper*" as he struck the stage; some that he shouted it as he ran. Nobody really knows whether he said anything as he ran — certainly he did n't stop to say it! He was fleeing for his life and he wasted no time on speeches. He crossed the stage some feet in front of Harry Hawk (Asa Trenchard), ran between Miss Keene and W. J. Ferguson standing in the passage near the prompt entrance,<sup>2</sup> rushed past Withers, the orchestra leader, who was on his way to the stairs close by the back door, and as Withers stood stock still in his way, Booth struck at him with the knife, knocking him down, made a rush for the door, and was gone.<sup>3</sup>

Joseph B. Stewart, who sat in the front row on the right hand side of the orchestra almost directly under the President's box, was the first man on the stage. He thought he was there a very few seconds after the shot was fired and

<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 76, Ferguson; Buckingham, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with W. J. Ferguson, by Ada Patterson, in *Theatre Magazine* for May, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 79, William Withers.

that he pursued Booth closely, being within thirty feet of him when he went out of the door. Others present felt equally sure that Stewart was not on the stage until Booth was off it, and no other testimony corroborated Stewart's account of the immediateness of his pursuit. He did, however, rush after the fleeing assassin, shouting "Stop that man!" and whether he came as near to grasping Booth's bridle as he thought he did, he was in the alley soon after Booth had left it.<sup>1</sup> But before any one seemed to have sense to think of pursuit, the clattering of hoofs on the stone-paved alley had died away, and the President's murderer was swallowed up in the night.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, in that upper box, the tall, gaunt man in the rocking-chair had not changed his position, the smile he wore over Asa's last sally had not even given place to a look of pain — so lightning-quick had unconsciousness come. The head was bent slightly forward, the eyes were closed; Mrs. Lincoln had clutched his arm, but had not moved from her seat; neither had Miss Harris. At the barred door to the passage-way many persons were pounding frantically, and Major Rathbone, staggering to the door, found the bar, removed it, and of those seeking admittance allowed several who represented themselves to be surgeons to come in. Another surgeon was lifted

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 79, Joseph B. Stewart.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix XXI: Note about Edwin Booth in Boston.

up into the box from the stage,<sup>1</sup> and almost as soon as any to reach the scene of tragedy was Miss Keene, who took the President's head into her lap.

There was a slight delay in locating the wound; some looked for it in the breast and tore open the President's shirt. Dr. Charles Taft, who had been lifted into the box, located the wound behind the left ear, and countermanded the order just given for the President's carriage. The ride over the then cobble-paved streets of Washington was not to be thought of, and Dr. Taft directed that instead the nearest bed be sought. He lifted the President's head from which the blood and brain tissue was oozing rapidly, and, others helping with the rest of the long, inert body, a shutter was impressed for service as a litter, and the horror-stricken little procession went along the upper lobby toward the stairs. At the head of the staircase, Major Rathbone, who was assisting Mrs. Lincoln, had to ask Major Potter to help him, as he was fainting from the loss of blood from his arm.<sup>2</sup>

Across Tenth Street from the theatre was the four-story brick house of William Peterson, a tailor, who sublet most of the rooms to lodgers. The front door of the house was open when those bearing the dying President reached the street, and a man was standing on the steps.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Charles Taft. See his statement in the *Century Magazine*, Feb. 1893, p. 634.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 78, Rathbone.

Dr. Taft directed the other bearers thither and the man — Peterson — rushed in and shouted "The President is coming!"<sup>1</sup> Then he disappeared. He was a drunken, cruel fellow whose much-abused wife was on a brief visit to Baltimore.

Down the stairs from the floors above came several young men lodgers, meeting the bearers as they entered the hall with their burden. At the end of the hall was a long, narrow bedroom whose tenant, a young soldier named Willie Clark, was not in.<sup>2</sup> On Willie's neat little bed the President was laid — cornerwise, as only that way could his great length be accommodated — and messengers were sent in every direction, for Captain Lincoln, for the members of the Cabinet, for the Surgeon-General, for the President's private physician, Dr. Stone, for his pastor, Dr. Gurley, of the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, and for others whose right it was to share in the closing scenes of the great Emancipator's life.

Up at the White House the evening passed quietly after the President and Mrs. Lincoln left for the theatre. An old college chum had called on Captain Robert and stayed,

<sup>1</sup> Statement to the present writer by Mr. Henry Ulke, portrait painter, who was then one of the lodgers in the Peterson house. Mr. Ulke and his brother went up and down the basement stairs all night, carrying bottles which they constantly re-filled with hot water; the surgeons laid these bottles along the President's limbs in the hope of relaxing their rigour.

<sup>2</sup> See Willie Clark's letter, Appendix XXII.

talking and smoking in the captain's room, until about ten o'clock. He had just gone when one of the sergeants of the Invalid Corps, who was doing duty at the White House, rang the bell and told Tom Pendel, who opened the door, that an attempt had been made to kill Secretary Seward by cutting his throat. Pendel thought the rumour a false one, arising with some person who did not know of the Secretary's broken jaw. In a few minutes, however, the sergeant returned, rang again, and said it was true about Mr. Seward.<sup>1</sup>

It was a little after half-past ten when Pendel, looking out, saw a number of excited persons hurrying toward the east gate of the White House. In the lead were Senators Sumner, Stewart, and Conness, who had just come from Secretary Seward's house on a run.<sup>2</sup> Sumner asked Pendel, who went out to see what the matter was, for news of the President, and Pendel said: "Mr. Senator, I wish you would go down to the theatre and see if anything has happened."

Just then there was the sound of furious driving; a carriage turned in at the north gate of the White House grounds and hardly slackened speed as it approached the portico. Captain Robert Lincoln, who had not yet retired, heard the approach of the carriage and stepped

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<sup>1</sup> "Thirty-six Years in the White House," by Thomas C. Pendel, pp. 40-45.

<sup>2</sup> "Reminiscences of W. M. Stewart," p. 191.

to the open window of his room to look out. He saw several persons alight in evident excitement, and his immediate thought was that they were come on one of those life or death errands which brought so many frantic petitioners to the White House at all sorts of hours; it being a strict rule of the President that they were to be admitted without delay and brought to him, no matter what time they came. Not many ever came in vain, and Captain Lincoln felt regretful that this time anxious petitioners for a life must turn away disappointed — or wait.<sup>1</sup>

No one knows, to this day, who was in that carriage, or if any one does he has not gone on record. Pendel says it was Isaac Newton, the Commissioner of Agriculture; Senator Stewart says "one of the attachés of the White House"; Captain Lincoln says he has n't the least idea who it was. But somebody, fresh from Tenth Street, brought the news of the assassination, and Senator Conness said: "This is a conspiracy to murder the entire Cabinet."<sup>2</sup> And he ordered the sergeants on duty to "Go immediately to Secretary Stanton's house and prevent his assassination if possible." The soldiers started instantly and ran at top speed until they reached Stanton's house where, according to Senator Stewart,

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<sup>1</sup> Told by Mr. Robert Lincoln to the present writer.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart, p. 191.

they saw "a man on the steps who had just rung the bell. Seeing them he took fright and ran away and was never afterward heard of. When the soldiers ran up the steps Stanton himself had come to the door in response to the ring. Had the soldiers been a few minutes later I have no doubt that Stanton also would have been one of the victims of the plot."

The three Senators went directly to Tenth Street. The messengers, accompanied by Pendel, went upstairs to break the news to Captain Lincoln and get him to go immediately to the Peterson house. Pendel says it was he who told, and that what he said was: "Captain, there has something happened to the President. You had better go down to the theatre and see what it is." Captain Lincoln understood that his father had been shot. "Where?" he asked. "In the arm," he thought somebody told him. "That is nothing," he said. "I am grateful that he got off so easy." And he quite cheerfully made ready to go to his father. Major Hay, who roomed at the White House, was also informed, and immediately made ready to obey the summons to Tenth Street. As he was leaving, he gave Pendel orders to allow no one to enter the White House.

Pendel knew the seriousness of the President's condition, if not the hopelessness of it, and it was with stream-

ing eyes and a breaking heart that he took up his position at the door. Presently there was a sound of some one coming to the east door downstairs and up the inner stairway from the basement. Pendel turned to look, and in a moment a small figure rushed at him in a wild abandon of grief. It was poor little Tad, who had heard the awful news at Grover's Theatre. He buried his head in the breast of his kind crony, the doorkeeper, and sobbed, "O Tom Pen! Tom Pen! they've killed my papa dead — they've killed my papa dead!"

It was almost midnight when Pendel got the little lad sufficiently pacified to go upstairs to bed. Up there, in the room that seemed so empty of the great, kind presence that was always, no matter what sorrows oppressed it, full of tender playfulness with Tad, the doorkeeper undressed the inconsolable boy and helped him into bed, then lay down beside him soothing him and talking to him till he fell asleep.<sup>1</sup>

It was a little before ten o'clock when a man came hurriedly to the door of Justice Cartter, who lived on Fifteenth Street near H, and asked if Surgeon-General Barnes were there. The messenger had come from the Surgeon-General's residence in all haste to fetch the doctor to Secretary Seward's. The Surgeon-General

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<sup>1</sup> Told by Pendel to the present writer.





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### LINCOLN AND HIS SON, TAD

Said to have been made shortly before the assassination.

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had been playing whist in the library, and hearing the inquiry for him he came into the hall and asked what was the matter. When told that an attempt had been made to assassinate Secretary Seward, he and Justice Cartter at once went around the corner to Mr. Seward's house, where they found a scene of indescribable horror and confusion.<sup>1</sup>

Less than half an hour ago Lewis Payne had come to the Seward house. William Bell, a coloured boy who was "second waiter," went to the door, and when it was opened Payne stepped inside. "He had a little package in his hand; he said it was medicine for Mr. Seward from Dr. Verdi, and that he was sent by Dr. Verdi to direct Mr. Seward how to take it." Bell told him he could not go upstairs — that it was against orders for anybody to be allowed up — but if Payne would give him the medicine and tell him the directions, he would take it up and tell Mr. Seward's nurse. All the time Bell was expostulating Payne was walking along the hall toward the stairs, the medicine in his left hand and his right hand in the pocket of his light overcoat. His manner was so convincing that the coloured boy began to believe himself wrong in barring the way, and followed Payne up the stairs, begging pardon for having told him

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<sup>1</sup> Buckingham, p. 19.

he must not go up. "Oh, I know, that's all right!" Payne assured him, and went on — Bell at his heels entreating him not to walk so heavily.

At the top of the stairs Payne encountered Mr. Frederick Seward, a son of the Secretary, and when the message about the medicine was repeated to Mr. Frederick he went into his father's room, coming out almost immediately with word that the Secretary was asleep and the medicine could not be delivered to him now. There was an argument lasting perhaps five minutes, then Payne turned on his heel saying: "Well, if I cannot see him ——" and started down the stairs preceded by Bell. They had gone but a few steps when Payne turned back, made a rush at Mr. Frederick, severely wounding him in the head with the butt of a pistol which broke in the furious blows. Mr. Frederick fell back into his sister's room. She screamed, and aroused another brother, Major Augustus H. Seward, who had retired at 7.30, expecting to be called at eleven to sit up with his father. Sergeant George F. Robinson, who was acting as nurse to the Secretary, opened the door of the Secretary's room at the sound of the scuffle in the hall, and was immediately struck in the forehead by Payne's heavy knife, and held aside while Payne rushed into the dimly-lighted room and threw himself upon the prostrate Secretary, striking

wildly at his victim's neck with the knife. When Major Seward reached his father's room and saw the "two men, one trying to hold the other," his first thought was that his father had become delirious and attacked his nurse. So he seized the uppermost man and dragged him off, but soon discovered from the man's size and strength that he was not the Secretary. Then Major Seward thought Sergeant Robinson had gone out of his mind, and he made a heroic effort to get this infuriated person out of the room so as not further to endanger or alarm the Secretary.

While this encounter was in progress the assailant kept striking at Major Seward's head and repeating in an intense voice "I'm mad! I'm mad!" On reaching the hall he gave a sudden turn and sprang away, disappearing down the stairs, but not before he had also wounded Emrick W. Hansell, another nurse.

During those few bloody minutes that Payne was upstairs, Bell had run to give the alarm, and was just returning to the house when he saw Payne rush down the steps, spring on to a horse, and ride north to I Street, west to Fifteen-and-a-half Street, and thence at a gallop into Vermont Avenue.

When General Barnes and Justice Cartter got to the house they found Dr. Verdi already there attending to

the five wounded men, of whom the Secretary was the least seriously hurt, because the assailant's knife had struck the steel frame binding the fractured jaw, and glanced off without inflicting the mortal hurt it must otherwise have accomplished.<sup>1</sup>

General Barnes was occupied with the Secretary and his gravely wounded son, Mr. Frederick, Dr. Verdi dressing the hurts of the others, when a "night liner" (hack) was driven rapidly to the door and the bell was violently pulled. Justice Cartter went to the door and found the negro hackman who said that the President had been shot and taken to a house on Tenth Street, and that he had been sent to fetch General Barnes to the President's bedside. The hackman had been sent to General Barnes's house, thence to Justice Cartter's, where he was told of the assault on Secretary Seward, and was now here and very thoroughly frightened.

Justice Cartter went to Mr. Seward's room, called General Barnes aside, and told him of the demand for his presence at another bedside. Explanation was then made to Major Seward for their abrupt leaving, and Justice and Surgeon-General hurried into the hack, telling the driver not to spare his horses. But the negro was so panic-stricken that he declared he would n't drive

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 154, 157, W. H. Bell, George F. Robinson, Major Augustus Seward, Surgeon-General Barnes, Doctor T. S. Verdi.

back into that crowd around Tenth Street for all the money in Washington. Whereupon Justice Cartter, a powerful man, jumped out of the carriage, seized the negro from the box, thrust him inside with General Barnes, mounted the driver's seat, and drove furiously toward Tenth Street. At Eleventh and F, the guard already in effect to keep back the frantic populace from the scene of the tragedy attempted to hold them, but the Justice, shouting that the Surgeon-General was inside, never slackened until he pulled up in front of the Peterson house.<sup>1</sup>

Secretaries Stanton and Welles were already there, as were Captain Lincoln and Major Hay, and all looked anxiously to the Surgeon-General to see if he could not give some more hopeful diagnosis than that already given by Dr. Taft and Dr. Stone. But the Surgeon-General, carefully and tenderly noting where the ball had entered and the course it took (obliquely upward to a point behind the right eye), could only shake his head sadly. He could not say how long the President's great vitality might fight off dissolution, but there was no possible hope — none.<sup>2</sup>

Soon Senators Sumner, Stewart, and Conness came, and General Barnes told them that while they were

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<sup>1</sup> Buckingham, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 81 Dr. Stone.

privileged to enter the President's death-chamber, being Senators, "there are too many people in there hastening the President's death." Whereupon Senators Stewart and Conness retired, but Sumner rushed into the little room declaring: "I will go in. Nothing could keep Charles Sumner out."<sup>1</sup>

Outside, the city seethed with excitement. Rumours grew wilder and wilder as the night grew old. When the papers went to press at two o'clock it was impossible for them to say just what had really happened<sup>2</sup> except that a man, declared by some to be John Wilkes Booth, an actor, had fatally shot the President, and a man believed to be John H. Surratt had stabbed the Secretary of State. Rumours of Grant's assassination on the train which was carrying him north were rife. Rumours of a vast conspiracy to kill all the heads of Government, to burn and sack Washington, to install Jefferson Davis in the White House, were passing from mouth to mouth and growing, as they passed, like genii out of a bottle. There was a frenzy of feeling against the South, against actors, against Copperheads.

The panic-stricken mob in Ford's Theatre had begun

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<sup>1</sup> Stewart, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> The *National Intelligencer*, Washington, when it went to press at 2 A. M., said: "Rumours are so thick, the excitement of this hour is so intense, that we rely entirely upon our reporters to advise the public of the details and results of this night of horrors. Evidently conspirators are among us." Appendix XXIII: Note on despatches of the night.



to shout: "Burn the theatre!" when they realized that it was the assassin of the President who had fled across the stage. And the same unthinking fury characterized many of the mobs that surged through the streets all night. The one voice that hushed them, that stayed violence, was the voice of that man in any crowd who would climb anything that might elevate him where he could be heard, and entreat: "Hush! Stop! What would Mr. Lincoln say if he could talk to you?"<sup>1</sup>

The proprietor of the National Hotel, who had been in the audience at Ford's Theatre, was a noted shot. When he saw the man leap from the President's box he stood up and cried: "That man has shot the President! Somebody give me a pistol." But before any one could get a pistol to him, the mad rush across the stage was over — the man had gone. Into the office of the National Hotel about two in the morning, came soldiers saying the man — the assassin — was John Booth. "Impossible!" they told the soldiers — these men who knew John Booth so well. And all night long, that night of terror, they watched the door for John to come in — to come walking blithely in as was his wont, and give the lie to this foul story.<sup>2</sup>

Up on Tenth Street it was quiet. Cavalry patrolled E and F Streets as far as Ninth Street on the east and

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<sup>1</sup> Stewart, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> Told the present writer by Mr. Burfon.

Eleventh Street on the west, and kept at bay every one who had not urgent business within those lines.

The parlour floor of the Peterson house had a front and a back parlour and a bedroom at the end of a long, narrow hall. In the front parlour, on a sofa, Mrs. Lincoln sat, comforted as best he could by young Captain Lincoln, who came from time to time from his mother's side into the chamber of death. At long intervals Mrs. Lincoln went into the room where her husband lay, but was unable to stay for more than a few moments at a time.<sup>1</sup>

In the back parlour, which was often used as a bedroom and then had in it a bed not made up, Secretary Stanton sat at a small table commanding a view of the hallway and all who approached the little room at the end. There he wrote despatches announcing the tragedy, there he sat and questioned the first obtainable witnesses — Corporal James Tanner taking down the testimony, and Assistant-Secretary of War Charles A. Dana directing the sending of orders for precaution (particularly in the case of General Grant) and for the arrest of persons mentioned as likely to have complicity in the two murderous deeds.<sup>2</sup>

Through the house, above the soft footfalls of those ministering to the dying, above the hushed tones of Stanton

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<sup>1</sup> Statements of Mr. Field, Major Rathbone, Miss Harris. See Appendices XXIV, XVIII, XX.

<sup>2</sup> Oldroyd, pp. 35-37.

and Dana, above the sobbing of Mrs. Lincoln, sounded the incessant moaning, the stertorous breathing of the President. He was entirely unconscious, not the faintest glimmer of understanding had come to him since the bullet ploughed its way through his brain. He never knew what sped him hence. He was here, smiling at long-delayed peace, and then he was There, smiling in peace never-ending. In the interval his long, gaunt body — aged by the four years of war more than most men age in a score of years<sup>1</sup> — lay diagonally across the low-posted walnut bed in Willie Clark's little 9 x 17 foot room. There was striped wall paper on the walls, and a few pictures: a cheap copy of Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair," a copy of Herring's "The Village Blacksmith," and copies of "The Stable" and "The Barnyard" by the same artist, also a photograph of Ida, Clara, and Nannie Clark — Willie's sisters. On the table were cushions worked for Willie by his sisters Ida and Clara.

At a quarter before two Mrs. Lincoln went into the little room. The President was quiet then — the moaning, the struggling motion of the long arms, were over. She

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<sup>1</sup> No words could tell the story of those years as do the life and death masks of Lincoln, the one made in Chicago, by Volk, shortly after Mr. Lincoln's election, and the other in the White House, soon after his death. The present writer, holding a copy of one in each hand, in the magnificent Lincoln library of Major W. H. Lambert, of Philadelphia, felt as never before what the war must have meant to the man whose face it so awesomely altered.

stayed until ten minutes after two, when she returned to her sofa in the parlour. At three o'clock she went in again for a few moments. At 3.35 Dr. Gurley knelt by the bedside and prayed. At six o'clock the pulse began to fail. At 6.30 the laboured breathing was heard again. At 7 the physicians announced signs of immediate dissolution, and at 7.22 the faint pulse ceased,<sup>1</sup> the last breath fluttered from between the parted lips, and Stanton's voice broke the unbearable stillness saying: "Now he belongs to the ages."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Gurley knelt again and prayed, after which he went into the front parlour and prayed with Mrs. Lincoln, presently assisting her to enter the death-chamber and, leaning upon her son, look on the still face of the dead Chief.

Three squares away, in a small bedroom in the Kirkwood House, sleeping in a drunken stupor, lay the unshaven, unkempt, unheeding man into whose hands the deed of mad John Booth had given the reins of government.<sup>3</sup>

At nine o'clock the body of the President was placed in a temporary coffin, wrapped in an American flag, and

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<sup>1</sup> Minutes of Dr. Ezra W. Abbott, attending physician.

<sup>2</sup> "Life of Lincoln," by Ida M. Tarbell, vol. iv., p. 40; Nicolay and Hay, "Life of Lincoln," vol. x, pp. 285, *et seq.* O. R. Series I, vol. xlv., part iii., pp. 780, 784.

<sup>3</sup> Stewart, p. 94.



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THE DEATH OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

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borne by six soldiers to a hearse. Then, very quietly, with only a tiny escort, moving through to G Street, the return to the White House was made. A spring rain had been falling since early morning, and the gay buntings that were so soon to be replaced with the trappings of woe wore a bedraggled look as the hero of peace went past.





PART III

THE PENALTY



### III.

#### THE PENALTY

WHEN Booth left the alley behind Ford's Theatre and dashed into F Street, he probably rode down F to Seventh, along Seventh to the Avenue, down the Avenue (afterward it was said the horse had been heard galloping past the National Hotel) to the Peace Monument, and around the south side of the Capitol, then south and east to the Navy Yard bridge over the eastern branch of the Potomac.

At the bridge he was halted by Sergeant Silas T. Cobb, who detained him for three or four minutes while he asked his name, residence, and destination. Booth gave answers that satisfied the sergeant, even when asked why he tried to get out of town when he must know that no one was allowed to pass after nine o'clock; to this Booth said that as it was a dark night he had thought to wait a little later than the usual time and have the light of the moon to ride home by. The moon was just rising as they parleyed, and the sergeant told Mr. Booth — who gave his right name — to pass.

In ten minutes or thereabouts another man rode up and was challenged. He said his name was Smith, that he lived at White Plains, and that the reason he was late was, he had been in bad company. This was Davy Herold, and he was close under the shadow of his own home where his mother and sisters were sleeping.<sup>1</sup>

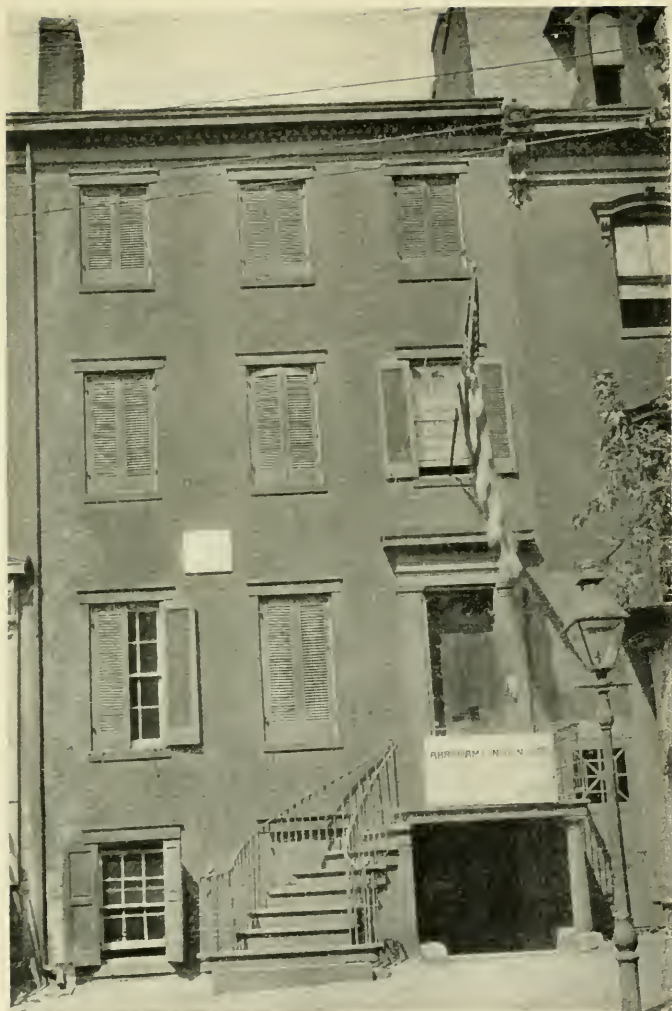
Soon a third horseman rode furiously up and inquired if a man riding a roan horse had gone that way. This was Fletcher, the liveryman, who had chased Davy Herold thus far from the corner of Fourteenth and the Avenue, to demand the immediate return of his horse which Davy was riding. The sergeant told this man he might pass if he insisted, but that he could not return until morning; so Fletcher turned reluctantly back, and at the corner of E and Fourteenth Streets, where he stopped to speak to the foreman of another stable, he was told that "President Lincoln is shot and Secretary Seward is almost dead," and advised that he would "better keep in." It was then after one o'clock, he said. If it was, he must have loitered, for he had ridden only about six miles.<sup>2</sup>

After leaving the bridge in Anacostia, Maryland (the south end of the Navy Yard bridge), Booth turned to the left and rode up a hill called Good Hope Hill, half way up the ascent of which he stopped Polk Gardiner, a farmer

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 84, Silas T. Cobb.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 83, John Fletcher.



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THE HOUSE ON TENTH STREET, WASHINGTON, D. C., IN WHICH  
LINCOLN DIED

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lad hastening to the bedside of his dying father, and asked if a horseman had passed. Half a mile nearer to the bridge Gardiner passed Davy. There were several teamsters in the road just then, and Davy directed a general inquiry at them as to whether a horseman had passed. He probably overtook Booth in ten minutes or thereabouts.<sup>1</sup>

Booth, it must be remembered, had broken the fibula or small bone of his left leg, in his fall to the stage and was suffering the most excruciating torture as he rode, the splintered bone tearing into the flesh at every move.

Polk Gardiner told Booth the road to Marlboro was the straight road ahead, but at the top of Good Hope Hill Booth and Herold turned to the right into the road to Surrattsville, thirteen miles southeast of Washington. Here they roused the tavern-keeper — Mrs. Surratt's tenant — from a drunken stupor and Herold went into the bar-room where he called for the carbines he and John Surratt and Atzerodt had left there five or six weeks before in their preparations for the President's abduction on March 16th. Herold got a bottle of whisky and took it out to Booth as he sat on his horse in the yard; the second carbine, however, Booth refused to take, saying he could not carry it. Herold got, too, the field-glasses belonging to Booth, which were the contents of the small package

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 85, Polk Gardiner.

Mrs. Surratt had left there that afternoon. Herold paid Lloyd for the whisky and as they were leaving (they stayed only about five minutes) the man who had not come in said — or, so, at least, Lloyd swore, although he admitted he was “right smart in liquor that afternoon, and after night I got more so” — “I will tell you some news if you want to hear it: I am pretty certain that we have assassinated the President and Secretary Seward.”<sup>1</sup>

When soldiers, on Saturday and Sunday, asked Lloyd if two men had stopped there or passed that way Friday night, he said he had not seen them; but the following Saturday, when the Secretary of War’s bulletin was out announcing \$100,000 reward for the apprehension of Booth, Herold, and John Surratt, Mr. Lloyd began to have a squeamish conscience and hastened to put the Government in possession of his valuable knowledge.

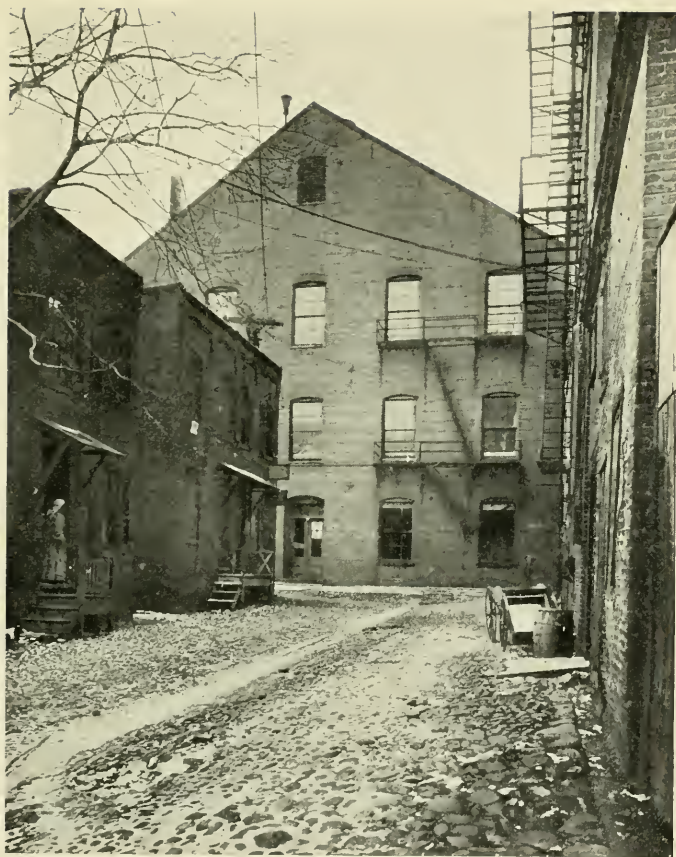
Booth and Herold rode away from Surrattsville in the bright moonlight, and instead of turning to the west at the cross-roads and taking the much-nearer road to Port Tobacco, where they hoped to cross the Potomac on Atzerodt’s boat and get into Virginia, they were obliged to turn eastward to Upper Marlboro, for Booth had determined to go to Dr. Mudd’s house to get his broken bone set.

Five miles from Surrattsville they galloped through the

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<sup>1</sup>C. T. p. 85, John M. Lloyd.





THE ALLEY BEHIND FORD'S THEATRE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

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little village of T. B. out of which six roads branch in as many directions. If they roused any one here, at one o'clock, to inquire their way, we do not know it. The next we know of them is at four o'clock Saturday morning, when Davy Herold stood knocking at Dr. Samuel Mudd's front door. Dr. and Mrs. Mudd were sleeping in a back room downstairs, and Dr. Mudd, who was not feeling well, asked Mrs. Mudd if she would mind seeing who it was — a knock at a country doctor's door at that hour being, doubtless, much less alarming than a knock at an ordinary residence door would have been. Mrs. Mudd replied: "I would rather you would go and see for yourself." So the doctor got up and went to the door in his night clothes. In the yard were two men and two horses; one man was mounted and the other, who had knocked, was holding both horses by the bridles. The dismounted man said the other had broken his leg and desired medical attendance, to which the doctor readily acceded and returned to his room to put on some clothing and ask Mrs. Mudd to tear bandages for him. While she was doing this, the doctor and the uninjured man got the injured man off his horse and carried him into the parlour, where the doctor cut the long riding-boot off the swollen foot — or, rather, cut a slit about twelve inches long from the instep upward, so the boot would come off over the swollen ankle — and

found that the fracture was about two inches above the instep. After dressing the injured leg, Dr. Mudd granted the man's request for a little rest, and helped his companion to carry him upstairs and put him to bed. Then the horses were put up, and Dr. Mudd went back to bed and to sleep.

At 7.30, breakfast being ready, the doctor sent a servant upstairs to tell the uninjured young man, who said his name was Tyson, that he was asked to join the family at table. Mrs. Mudd, meanwhile, was busying herself in the kitchen with a tray for the sick man which she sent up to him by a servant.

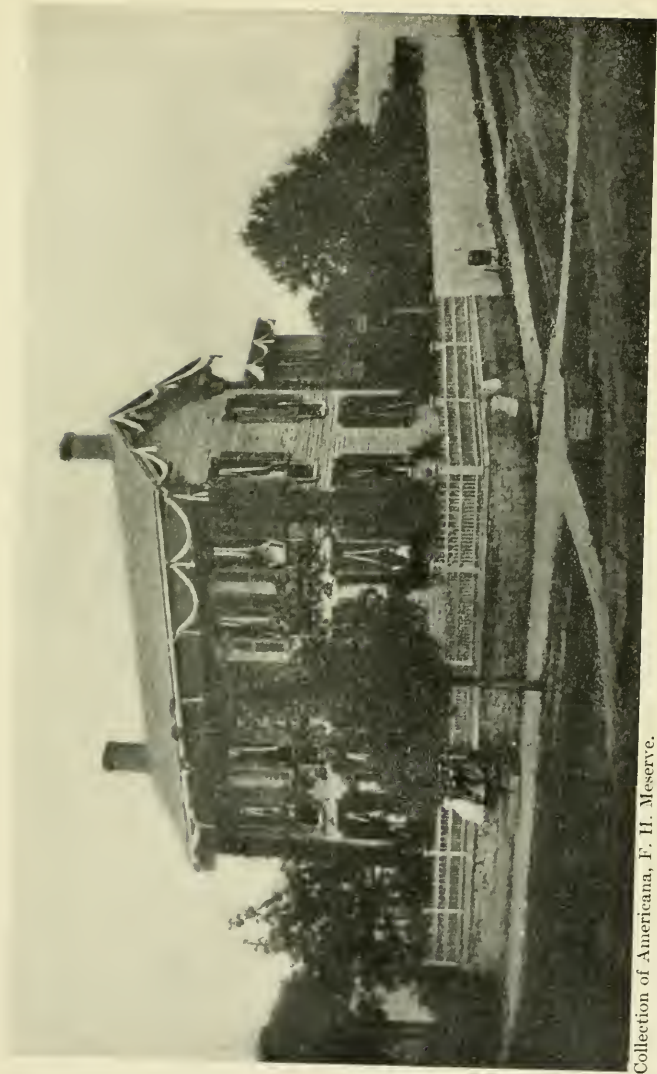
At breakfast "Tyson" asked the doctor some questions about people in lower Maryland, and betrayed so much acquaintance with the region that Mrs. Mudd asked him if he were a native of it. He replied: "No, ma'am, but I have been frolicking around for five or six months." Whereupon Mrs. Mudd reminded him that "all play and no work makes Jack a bad boy. Your father ought to make you go to work." "My father is dead," he answered, "and I am ahead of the old lady." He seemed, Mrs. Mudd said, "not to have a care in the world." He told the doctor he and his companion, whom he called Tyler, were on their way to the river, and asked which was the nearest road. The doctor took him out into the yard

and pointed the road out to him. Then "Tyson" went upstairs and probably slept, for nothing further was heard of the strangers till dinner-time. "Tyson" ate dinner with the family and seemed to relish it keenly, but the man upstairs sent back untouched all the food that went to him for breakfast and for dinner. At dinner "Tyson" asked the doctor if he could get a carriage in the neighbourhood to carry his friend away, and the doctor replied that he was going to Bryantown after dinner to get the mail and see some patients, and if "Tyson" cared to go with him he would see what could be done about a carriage. After they left, Mrs. Mudd, having asked if she might go up to see the sick man and received cordial permission, took to his room a tray with some cake, a couple of oranges, and a glass of wine, and asked the man, whose face was turned to the wall, if there was anything she could do for him. He asked for brandy, but there was none in the house, and as he showed no disposition to talk, Mrs. Mudd went downstairs and busied herself in the preparations for Easter then going on in her kitchen.

In a little while "Tyson" came back and rapped on the kitchen window. He said he and the doctor had gone to the home of the doctor's father and asked the loan of the family carriage; but the morrow being Easter the carriage was needed to take the ladies to church. So "Tyson"

concluded to try the horses and, leaving Dr. Mudd on the road to Bryantown, returned. He went upstairs, and Mrs. Mudd heard him and his companion moving around the room. In a short time they came downstairs, the injured man hobbling on a stick which "Tyson" had obtained of the Mudds' gardener. Mrs. Mudd was standing in the hall at the foot of the stairs when they came down, and she noticed that the heavy whiskers "Tyler" wore were false, for they became partially detached as he hobbled painfully down the stairs. Above the heavy whiskers the black eyes bespoke such agony that Mrs. Mudd begged "Tyson" not to take his suffering friend away. "If he suffers much we won't go far," said "Tyson." "I will take him to my lady-love's, not far from here." He helped the crippled man into the saddle, mounted his own horse, and they rode away.

An hour later Dr. Mudd returned from Bryantown and told his wife he had heard there of the assassination of the President, and that there were soldiers in Bryantown and all about looking for the assassin, who was believed to have crossed the Navy Yard bridge into Maryland. As he talked he said: "Those men who were here were suspicious characters. I will go to Bryantown and tell the officers." But Mrs. Mudd, although she agreed with him about the men and told him of the false whiskers,



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LINCOLN'S HOUSE, SPRINGFIELD, ILL., DRAPED AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH





begged him not to go and leave her alone — to send word to the soldiers from church to-morrow. This he did, telling his distant cousin, Dr. George A. Mudd, under whom he had studied medicine, about the circumstances of the two men's stay at his house; and Dr. George Mudd told Lieutenant Dana on Monday morning — a degree of unhaste which is the worst thing wherewith Dr. Samuel Mudd is chargeable.<sup>1</sup>

At that time it was said the assassin of the President "was supposed to be a man named Booth," but he was believed by many not to have got out of Washington. The assailant of Secretary Seward was reported to be a noted desperado and guerrilla named Boyle. Dr. Samuel Mudd was quoted as having said, on hearing Booth mentioned in connection with the murder, that he believed he could recognize the injured man who had been at his house as John Booth, whom he had last seen in Washington on the twenty-third of December.<sup>2</sup>

On Saturday, the 15th, after leaving Dr. Mudd's, Booth and Herold were able to proceed but slowly, owing to Booth's extreme weakness and suffering. They lost their

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Dr. Mudd," pp. 30-32, 46. Lieutenant David Dana reached Piscataway at seven Saturday morning, and shortly afterward telegraphed the War Office that he had "reliable information that the person who murdered (?) Secretary Seward is Boyce or Boyd, the man who killed Captain Watkins in Maryland." O. R. Series I, vol. xlv. part iii, p. 767.

<sup>2</sup> "Life of Mudd," pp. 46-47.

way once, and Herold went to a negro cabin and got its occupant, Oswald Swann, to go with them as guide to the house of Colonel Cox, which they did not reach until one o'clock.

Colonel Samuel Cox was a man whose Confederate sympathies were at least sufficiently ardent and dependable for him to have been apprised of the plot to abduct President Lincoln. Dr. Mudd seems also to have known of that plot, and he may have told Colonel Cox. Also, if the abduction scheme were ever talked over between Booth and Dr. Mudd, the doctor may have told Booth that Colonel Cox was one of the men on the way to the Potomac who could be relied on for assistance. Or Herold may have heard something to that effect in his "skylarking" about that country.

At any rate Colonel Cox, who had heard when the mail came, toward evening on Saturday, of the President's assassination, and who was deeply horrified thereby, was roused from his sleep about one o'clock Sunday morning by loud rapping with the old brass knocker on his front door. On the porch, or gallery, stood a young man who asked hospitality for himself and his wounded companion. The youth refused to give their names, and Colonel Cox told him he could not take in strangers of whom he knew nothing, because the assassin of the President was at large

and the country thereabouts was beginning to be searched by soldiers.

So Davy went back and reported this to John, who was waiting in the yard, and Colonel Cox's usually hospitable door was shut and bolted, and the Colonel went back to bed. Out in the moonlit yard the two fugitives consulted desperately. Then they paid Oswald Swann ten dollars and dismissed him; and when he was gone, back toward Bryantown, they found their way to a gully about half a mile from Colonel Cox's house, and there lay, trembling with apprehension.

Sunday morning — Easter Sunday morning — as Colonel Cox was riding about his farm, he came upon them. They must have recognized him from afar, for they did not shoot. When he saw the helplessness and the acute suffering of Booth his heart was touched, and it was when he saw that, probably, that Booth disclosed their identity and threw himself and his companion on the colonel's mercy. Cox's reprehension of Booth's awful deed was the first shock the mad, misguided young murderer had, his first bitter taste of the world's malediction instead of that grateful praise he had so confidently expected. Colonel Cox agreed, nevertheless, to give them the protection he had promised before their revelation, and conducted them to a pine thicket about a mile and a half from

his home. Returning to the house, he sent a white farm-hand to Huckleberry Farm to fetch Thomas A. Jones, his foster-brother.<sup>1</sup>

Jones said afterward that he suspected something wrong, as he had heard the evening before of the President's assassination; but he was hardly prepared to be told that the assassin was there and that he was to take care of him. Colonel Cox directed him to the thicket and told him to give a certain whistle as a signal, so he might reach the men without being shot.

Herold came out of the dense pines on hearing the whistle, and when he had received Jones's explanations conducted him to where Booth lay on the ground wrapped in blankets, his face drawn with great pain. Booth asked Jones a great many questions as to what people thought of the assassination, and appeared, Jones thought, to be proud of what he had done. "I at the time," Jones afterward admitted, "thought he had done a great act; but, great God! I soon saw that it was the worst blow ever struck for the South."

Jones carried food to the fugitives and took them the papers.<sup>2</sup> He told them he would let them know the minute

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<sup>1</sup> For details of Booth's flight after leaving Dr. Mudd's, up to the time he crossed the Rappahannock, the writer is indebted chiefly to the painstaking research of Mr. Osborn H. Oldroyd who, in 1901, walked over the entire ground traversed by Booth and Herold, and talked with many surviving persons who had assisted them in their flight.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix XXV: Note on Southern horror of Booth's deed.



LINCOLN'S FUNERAL CAR



Collection of Americana, F. H. Meserve.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S HEARSE



it was safe for them to emerge from their thicket and attempt to cross the Potomac. And there, on the property, not of Colonel Cox, but of Captain Michael Stone Robertson, Booth and Herold lay until the night of Friday, April 21st, just a week after Booth's crime.<sup>1</sup>

It was while he lay there and knew the surrounding country to be full of soldiers searching for him — while he could hear the neighing of the cavalry horses ridden in hot pursuit of him, and had to order his own horse and Herold's sent away and shot by Cox's overseer, Franklin A. Roby, lest their answering neigh betray the hiding-place — that he made two entries in his little red-leather-bound diary which he carried in an inner pocket and in the back of which he had the photographs of half a dozen pretty girls. He dated the first entry "April 13, 14, Friday the Ides," writing that date around the words "Te amo," evidently of long previous inscription at some happier time when he was practising love messages in Latin.

"Until to-day," that first entry says, "nothing was ever thought of sacrificing to our country's wrongs. For six months we had worked to capture. But our cause being almost lost, something decisive and great must be done. But its failure was owing to others, who did not strike for their country with a heart. I struck boldly,

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<sup>1</sup> Buckingham, pp. 64-65.

and not as the papers say. I walked with a firm step through a thousand of his friends, was stopped, but pushed on. A colonel was at his side. I shouted *Sic semper* before I fired. In jumping broke my leg. I passed all his pickets. Rode sixty miles [*sic*] that night, with the bone of my leg tearing the flesh at every jump.

"I can never repent it, though we hated to kill. Our country owed all her troubles to him, and God simply made me the instrument of his punishment.

"The country is not what it was. This forced Union is not what I have loved. I care not what becomes of me. I have no desire to outlive my country. This night (before the deed) I wrote a long article and left it for one of the editors of the *National Intelligencer* in which I fully set forth our reasons for our proceeding. He or the gov'n ——"<sup>1</sup>

Here, either from weakness, or perhaps with a sudden alarm, the diary abruptly breaks. And there is but one more entry, dated "Friday 21."

On the night of the assassination, shortly before ten o'clock, William Williams, a captain of police cavalry in Washington, passed Ford's Theatre, and seeing John Booth on the street in front of the theatre asked him to take a drink. John declined, pleading some good-natured excuse, and Captain Williams went on toward the Avenue and entered Doc Claggett's restaurant at the

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<sup>1</sup> Suppressed by the War Office for two years, and finally introduced in evidence, on the demand of the defence, at the trial of John Surratt in 1867. (S. T. vol. i, p 310) This copy was made especially for this book, direct from the original in the office of the Judge-Advocate-General, War Office, Washington, D. C.



corner of Tenth Street and the Avenue. He was there, less than half an hour later, when some one rushed in and said the President had been shot at Ford's. Captain Williams ran to the theatre, and there some one in authority told him to bring his cavalry quickly to the scene. This he did, and spent the night guarding the Kirkwood House where Johnson lay. Early on Saturday morning, Provost-Marshal O'Beirne went to the hotel with a cavalry squad under Lieutenant Alexander Lovett, and ordered Williams to join them in the hunt for the assassin.<sup>1</sup> In a few minutes the pursuers were clattering down the Avenue toward the Capitol, on their way to the Navy Yard bridge. A little later, Major A. C. Richards, Superintendent of the Metropolitan Police, crossed the bridge with his mounted squad. All day Saturday, indeed, pursuers poured into Maryland, until by nightfall there were nearly two thousand of them galloping madly around, doing doubtless rather more harm than good.

On Tuesday, a detective party under the command of Major James R. O'Beirne started down the river by steamer, arriving at Port Tobacco that night. Here there was a great meeting of the searching squads. Major Waite, of the 8th Illinois Cavalry, was there when the detectives got there; he had been as far south as Leonards-

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<sup>1</sup> Buckingham, pp. 61-63.

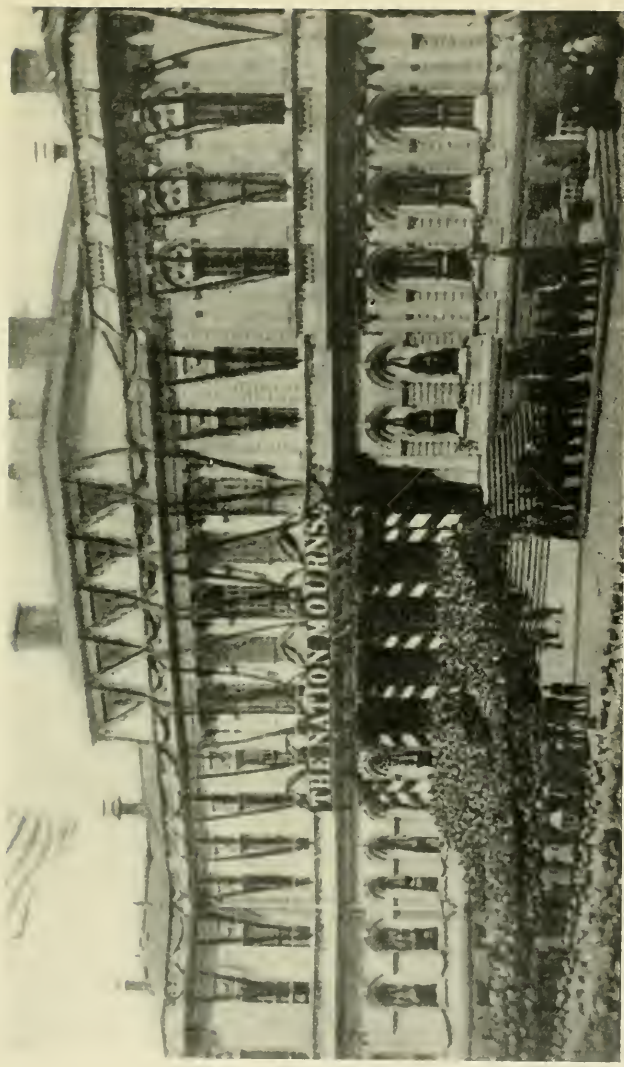
town and had returned because he could get no trace of the fugitives down that way. So it was determined to sweep the swamps around Port Tobacco and also to send a posse to the river, four miles away. Accordingly, fourteen hundred cavalymen there collected were ordered to dismount and search the swamps. These men were: 700 men of the 8th Illinois, 600 men of the 22nd Coloured Troops, and 100 men of the 16th New York Cavalry. But no trace of the assassin could be found, although the whole searching party doubtless passed him once, and small detachments of it probably repassed him many times.

On Wednesday, at the bar of Brawner's Hotel in Port Tobacco, Captain Williams stood next to a lean, inscrutable man who could, if he would, Williams felt, tell something about the man they sought. So Williams announced that he would give \$300,000 for information leading to the capture of Booth — keenly eyeing the lean man as he said it. But the lean man's face never changed its blank expression; his name was Thomas A. Jones.<sup>1</sup>

On Friday, Jones was at Allen's Fresh, and heard the discouraged officers of the searching squad order their men down into St. Mary's County, where they then began to believe the assassin must be. Mounting his

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<sup>1</sup> Buckingham, pp. 63, 64.



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NEW YORK CITY HALL WHEN LINCOLN'S BODY LAY THERE IN STATE

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horse, Jones made good time to the pine thicket, where he announced that the crossing of the river might be attempted that night.

No move could be made until after dark, and it was doubtless while waiting for this cover of the moonless night that Booth made the second and last entry in his diary. From the first sentence of this it would seem that on Thursday night Booth and Herold must have made a desperate and unadvised attempt to get away. The entry reads:

Friday, 21. — After being hunted like a dog through swamps and woods, and last night being chased by gunboats till I was forced to return, wet, cold, and starving, with every man's hand against me, I am here in despair. And why? For doing what Brutus was honoured for — what made William Tell a hero; and yet I, for striking down an even greater tyrant than they ever knew, am looked upon as a common cutthroat. My act was purer than either of theirs. One hoped to be great himself; the other had not only his country's, but his own, wrongs to avenge. I hoped for no gain; I knew no private wrong. I struck for my country, and her alone. A people ground beneath this tyranny prayed for this end, and yet now see the cold hands they extend to me! God cannot pardon me if I have done wrong; yet I cannot see any wrong, except in serving a degenerate people. The little, the very little, I left behind to clear my name, the Government will not allow to be printed. So ends all! For my country I have given up all that makes life sweet and holy — to-night misfortune upon my family, and

am sure there is no pardon for me in the heavens, since man condemns me so. I have only heard of what has been done (except what I did myself), and it fills me with horror. God, try and forgive me and bless my mother. To-night I will once more try the river, with the intention to cross; though I have a greater desire and almost a mind to return to Washington, and in a measure clear my name, which I feel I can do.

I do not repent the blow I struck. I may before my God, but not to man. I think I have done well, though I am abandoned, with the curse of Cain upon me, when, if the world knew my heart, that one blow would have made me great, though I did desire no greatness. To-night I try once more to escape these bloodhounds. Who, who, can read his fate? God's will be done. I have too great a soul to die like a criminal. Oh! may He spare me that, and let me die bravely. I bless the entire world. I have never hated nor wronged any one. This last was not a wrong, unless God deems it so, and it is with Him to damn or bless me. And for this brave boy, Herold, here with me, who often prays (yes, before and since) with a true and sincere heart, was it a crime in him? If so, why can he pray the same? I do not wish to shed a drop of blood, but I must fight the course. 'Tis all that 's left me.

When the darkness permitted, Jones went to the thicket and with Herold's help lifted Booth to his (Jones's) horse. Then, Herold leading the horse and Jones walking a little in advance to show the way and to scout, they proceeded to Huckleberry Farm, which was about three-quarters of a mile from the Potomac.

Here Jones hid his men in the orchard while he went in to get them some food. Booth begged piteously, with tears in his eyes, to be taken into the house for a cup of hot coffee, but Jones knew the risk of being seen by some of the negroes about the place was too great, and refused.

From Huckleberry Farm to the river the road is a winding one, through woods much of the way, and Jones and Herold made but slow progress over it with Booth on Jones's horse. At the water's edge was a flat-bot-tomed boat in which Henry Woodland, a faithful coloured man belonging to Jones, had been fishing for shad that day. Jones had told him where to leave the boat, and here he found it when he and the fugitives reached the river. He and Herold lifted Booth into the stern of the boat. Booth paid him all he would take (\$17), Herold took up the oars, and just before he pushed them off Jones lighted a candle for a moment and showed Booth how to steer to get into Machodoc Creek. He gave him, also, directions to a Mrs. Quesenberry's who, Jones thought, would harbour them. Booth thanked Jones profusely as he shoved their little boat out into the rough, rain-swept river — and in a moment more he and the boy Davy were alone in the all-enveloping blackness.<sup>1</sup>

“The night was ink-black,” said Jones, describing it

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<sup>1</sup>Buckingham, p. 67.

long afterward, "and I could not see either of the men, but had to feel for them; and as I was in the act of pushing the boat off Booth said, in a voice choked with emotion: 'God bless you, my dear friend, for all you have done for me. Good-bye, good-bye!' I pushed the boat off, and it glided out in the darkness. I could see nothing, and the only sound was the swish of the waves made by the little boat. Never in all my life did my heart go out in more pity and sympathy for my fellow-man than that night. I stood on the shore and listened till the sound of the oars 'died away in the distance, then climbed the hill and took my way home, and my sleep was more quiet, and peaceful than it had been for some time.'"<sup>1</sup>

It was more quiet and peaceful than it would have been could he have known what was happening to his late charges. After long, hard rowing, they found themselves twelve miles out of their way and obliged to retrace their course, which they did not dare to do then, lest daylight find them abroad. So they hid themselves in this strange place, not knowing what manner of place it was, and early in the morning Davy ventured cautiously out of hiding and made his way to the house of Colonel J. J. Hughes, where he begged food and learned how best to make their way thence to Machodoc Creek.

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<sup>1</sup> Oldroyd, p. 110.



All day Saturday they lay concealed beside Avon Creek, and in the darkness pushed their boat out again into the Potomac and made for the Virginia shore. Machodoc Creek, when they reached it, had so many small vessels in it that they would not venture in, but tried Gambo Creek, a mile distant. Here Herold tied their boat, helped Booth out, and settled him under a black-walnut tree while he sought Mrs. Quesenberry's cottage to ask for food and directions. He returned, presently, with Thomas H. Harbin, a brother-in-law of Jones, who lived in the neighbourhood. Harbin guided them farther up Gambo Creek and to the cabin of a man named Bryan, who gave them refuge from early Sunday morning until some time Sunday afternoon, when he conveyed them through the woods to the summer home of a Dr. Richard Stuart, from whom, on account of his well-known ardour for the Southern cause, Booth hoped to receive a welcome.

But Dr. Stuart was of no mind to put himself in jeopardy with the Government now that the war was over, and he refused to harbour the fugitives. He gave them some food (most of the food received must have been consumed by Davy, for whenever Booth was observed it was noted that he left everything untouched) and directed them to the cabin of a negro on his place, one William Lucas.

Booth, keenly feeling this rebuff, wrote a note (probably in Lucas's cabin) and sent it back to the doctor. It read:

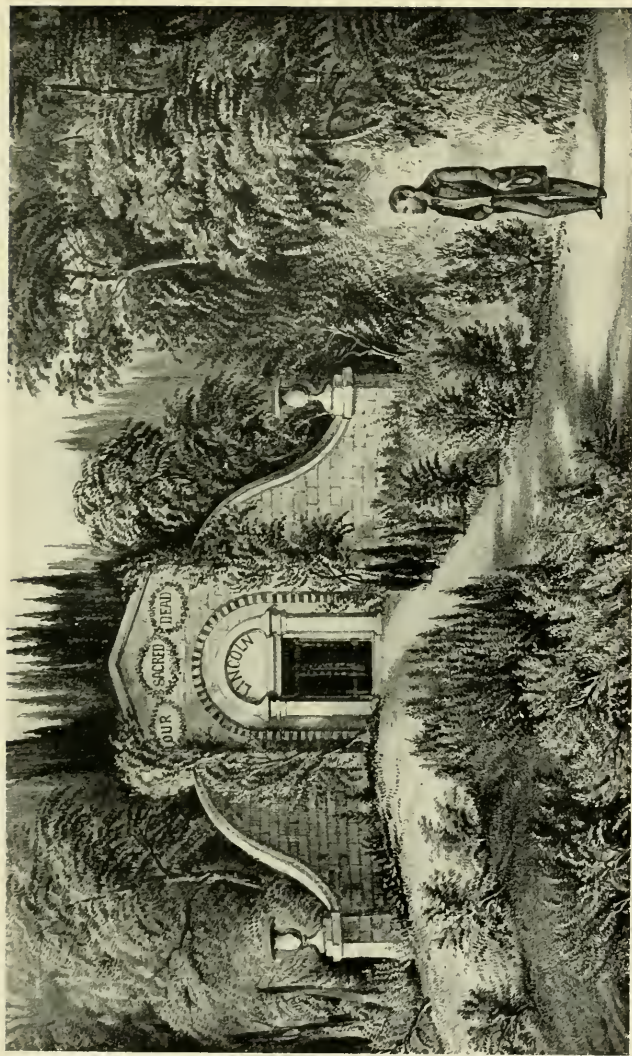
Forgive me, but I have some little pride. I cannot blame you for want of hospitality; you know your own affairs. I was sick, tired, with a broken leg, and in need of medical assistance. I would not have turned a dog away from my door in such a plight. However, you were kind enough to give us something to eat, for which I not only thank you; not for the rebuke and manner in which to [piece torn out]. It is not the substance, but the way in which kindness is extended, that makes one happy in the acceptance thereof. The *sauce* to meat is ceremony, meeting were bare without it. Be kind enough to accept the enclosed five dollars, although hard to spare, for what we have had.<sup>1</sup>

Lucas kept the men Sunday night, and early on Monday morning took them in a waggon to Port Conway on the Rappahannock, where they arrived at 9.30. William Rollins, the ferryman plying between Port Conway and Port Royal on the opposite side of the river, was sitting at the door of his little house mending his nets when Herold asked for water for himself and his lame "brother" who was across the street. He asked, too, about getting across the river, and was told he would have to wait a little while until the tide rose.

While they were waiting, three Confederate officers rode up to the ferry. They were Captain William M. Jett,

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<sup>1</sup> S. T. vol. i, p. 402.



Collection of Mr. Robert Coster.

GENERAL U. S. GRANT AT THE TEMPORARY TOMB OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN  
OAKRIDGE CEMETERY, SPRINGFIELD, ILL.

From a contemporary print.

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TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

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Lieutenant A. R. Bainbridge, and Lieutenant Ruggles, and when it became evident that they, too, were going to wait for the ferry, Herold got out of Lucas's waggon and came toward them, inquiring of them to what command they belonged. Ruggles answered: "Mosby's command." Whereupon Herold ventured: "If I am not inquisitive, can I ask you where you are going?" Jett told him that was a secret. Presently Booth got out of the waggon and on his rude, improvised crutches approached the officers, to whom he said he was a member of the corps of A. P. Hill, the gallant commander whose death in the Appomattox campaign had brought such sorrow to the Confederacy.

Herold then spoke up and said their name was Boyd, that his "brother" had been wounded in the fighting below Petersburg, and that they wanted to get "out of the lines." He turned to Jett — they were all sitting down, now, in front of Rollins's house — touched him on the shoulder and, saying he wanted to speak to him, led him over to the wharf where he further entreated Jett to take his "brother" and him south. To this pleading Jett answered: "I cannot go with any man that I don't know anything about." And Herold, after a moment's thought, whispered in great agitation: "We are the assassins of the President." Jett was confounded beyond the power of reply. He saw Ruggles at the river watering his horse

and called him to the wharf. There was a consultation in which Booth presently joined, hobbling down from the house; and the upshot of it was that when the tide rose they crossed together, Booth riding Ruggles's horse.

Arrived on the Port Royal side, Jett went to the house of a lady he knew and asked her if she would entertain two Confederate soldiers for two or three days. At first she said she would, then she refused. So the five men went along the road toward Bowling Green, and about three miles on the way came to the comfortable farmhouse of a Mr. Garrett who consented, on solicitation, to shelter a wounded Confederate for a day or two.

It was about three o'clock Monday afternoon when Jett — although he did not know Mr. Garrett — undertook the introduction to him of "John William Boyd," and asked Mr. Garrett to care for "Boyd" until Wednesday morning, at which time his companions would call for him. Thereupon the four others rode off, Herold stopping for that night with Ruggles at the house of a Mrs. Clark in the neighbourhood of Bowling Green. Jett had a sweetheart in the latter village and she was the occasion of his presence in the vicinity; her father kept the hotel, and thither Jett made haste as soon as he had safely bestowed Booth.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 90, Captain William M. Jett; *Century Magazine* for January, 1890, pp. 443 *et seq* : "The Pursuit and Death of Booth," by Bainbridge, Jett, and Ruggles.

At ten o'clock Monday morning, April 24th, S. H. Beckwith, General Grant's cipher operator, who had on the Saturday previous (April 22d) been ordered to the lower Potomac to establish communication between the various searching parties, wired as follows from Port Tobacco:

Major Eckert: Have just met Major O'Beirne, whose force has arrested Dr. Mudd and Thompson. Mudd set Booth's left leg (fractured), furnished crutches, and helped him and Herold off. They have been tracked as far as the swamp near Bryantown.<sup>1</sup>

Meantime, on Saturday night, hard on the trail of the fugitives, O'Beirne and his detectives had crossed the Potomac, and although most of the party were exhausted by that time and had to stay behind on the Virginia shore, the major and one man pushed on all night, going as far as King George, where they thought they found evidence that the men they sought were trying to make Port Royal. On Sunday they returned to Chapel Point, passing their quarry on the way, and O'Beirne telegraphed Washington for permission to pursue the chase to Port Royal. This was refused, and he was ordered home.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Lincoln in the Telegraph Office," p. 373.

<sup>2</sup> Baker, p. 494, describes how O'Beirne "asked permission to pursue, promising to catch the assassins before they reached Port Royal. This the department refused, and O'Beirne returned to Washington, cheerful and contented." We are glad to have Baker's assurance about the cheer and content, but O'Beirne's would be more convincing.



There was a large reward for the capture of Booth and Herold, and every one in the country, seemingly, was anxious to swear something or do something to get a portion of it. O'Beirne was undoubtedly entitled to a lion's share. But up in Washington there was Baker — Lafayette C. — chief of the Secret Service. Baker was a pious old fraud who left a most malodorous reputation in Washington, where he was tried for blackmail and technically acquitted, although he was very generally believed to be one of the worst leeches in the Government employ. He stood well with Stanton, however, and on Monday the 24th, when Beckwith's cipher message was received at the War Office, Stanton ordered O'Beirne home and gave the situation into Baker's hands.

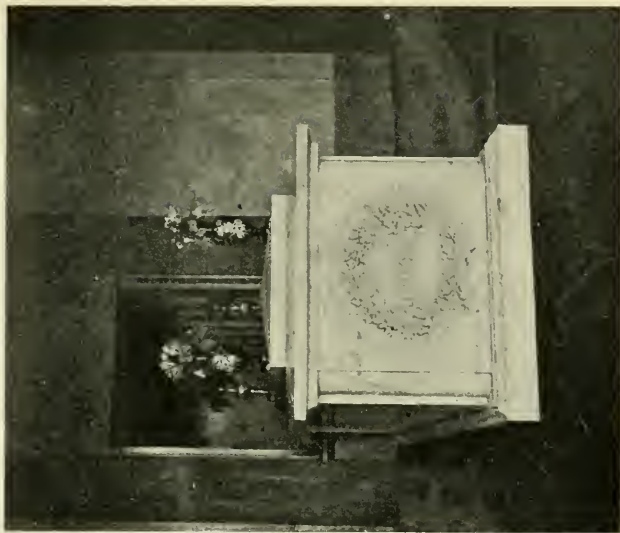
Lieutenant Edward P. Doherty and twenty-six picked men of the 16th New York Cavalry were ordered to report to Baker, which they did about two o'clock Monday afternoon. Baker put these men in charge of Colonel Everton J. Conger and Lieutenant Luther B. Baker, both of his staff and the latter a cousin of the Secret Service chief. And about four o'clock — shortly after Booth had been taken into the Garrett home — these twenty-nine pursuers embarked on the steamer *John S. Ide* and sailed down to Belle Plain, the nearest landing to Fredericksburg, arriving at ten o'clock. From Belle Plain they galloped across





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THE LINCOLN MONUMENT AT SPRINGFIELD, ILL.



CATACOMB AND SARCOPHAGUS

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country, riding all night and all day Tuesday. At three o'clock Tuesday afternoon they arrived at the Port Conway ferry, found Rollins, showed him photographs of Booth and Herold, and learned from him that the men wanted had been ferried across the Rappahannock by him just about twenty-four hours before. Rollins said they had started for Bowling Green, in company with three Confederate officers. He was arrested and taken as guide, the river was ferried again, and about sundown the posse galloped past Garrett's, where Booth and the family were seated on the porch.<sup>1</sup> Herold was there, too. He had come to the house during the afternoon with Jett and Bainbridge, who left him there and rode off. Later they came riding back and gave Booth the alarm, telling him of the presence of Federal troops at the ferry. When Booth saw the troops go by, he and Herold retired precipitately to a thicket behind the barn, not venturing thence until summoned to supper. Asked why they feared the Federal troops now that the war was over, Booth said they had been "in a little brush over in Maryland" and thought best to lie low for a few days.

The Garretts suspected their guest. He had offered to buy the horse of Jack Garrett for \$150, but young Garrett refused because the horse was one he had ridden through

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 91, 95, Everton J. Conger, Edward Doherty.

the late campaigns of Lee's army and was given him by the magnanimous terms of Grant's peace compact at Appomattox. Booth then offered Garrett ten dollars to take him the next morning to Guinea Station, eighteen miles away. To this Garrett agreed, and Booth paid the money then and there.

When bedtime came, Booth manifested strong reluctance to go upstairs, and on insisting that he would rather sleep anywhere else, even in a barn, was conducted to a large tobacco-house in which was stored a lot of valuable old furniture belonging to wealthy families of Port Royal who hoped thus to preserve their heirlooms from destruction at the hands of the Federal soldiers.

Jack Garrett believed this sleeping in the barn was a ruse; that the strange men would get up in the night and steal their horses. So he locked them into the tobacco-house and gave the key to a Miss Holloway who boarded with the Garretts. And he and his brother went to a shed near the tobacco-house, whence they could keep watch of their suspicious visitors.<sup>1</sup>

It was after eleven o'clock that night when the soldiers Booth had seen passing Garrett's before sundown reached Bowling Green, surrounded the little tavern, and arrested Jett, who was in bed. Conger demanded to know where

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<sup>1</sup> Oldroyd, pp. 298-299.

the two men Jett had crossed the ferry with were now, and Jett, very much frightened, told Conger where they were and offered to go as guide and show the way.

At two in the morning the squad of thirty surrounded Garrett's farmhouse and Lieutenant Baker rapped loudly at the kitchen door. Presently the elder Garrett came to the door in his nightclothes, and was roughly seized by Baker, who clutched the old man's throat with one hand and with the other held a pistol to his head. When Mr. Garrett could speak, he said the men were gone. But just then Jack Garrett appeared from his shed, and urged upon his father, whom Conger was threatening to hang, the need of telling the truth in the matter. A guard was left to watch the father, and the rest of the posse, led by Jack Garrett, approached the tobacco-house. The soldiers were stationed around the building — which was only about 100 feet from the residence — at a distance of ten yards, with four of them at the padlocked door. The key was fetched from the house, and while they were waiting for it a rustling noise could be heard within the tobacco-house.

Baker spoke to the men inside saying he would send in to demand their surrender one of the young Garretts. To this youth he ordered them to deliver their arms, after which they were to come out and give themselves up.

Accordingly, the trembling Garrett boy was sent within, and soon returned, reporting that Booth had cursed him for a betrayer and "reached down into the hay behind him" as if for a weapon — whereupon Garrett waited not on the order of his going, but went at once.

Then Baker called in to them that if they did not come out in five minutes he would fire the tobacco-house. To which Booth replied in a ringing voice: "Who are you; what do you want; whom do you want?"

"We want you," said Baker, "and we know who you are; give up your arms and come out."

"Let us have a little time to consider," urged Booth; and this was granted.

Ten minutes went by in hushed stillness, awaiting the least sound from within — fifteen minutes. In the yard the thirty pursuers, including Captain William Jett, who must have hated himself for his betrayal of a wounded man; hovering anxiously among them, the Garrett boys, indignant at the brutal treatment of their father, worried about the valuables in the tobacco-house, deeply concerned about the shock to their mother and the fright of their little sister; on the fringes of the little crowd, wide-eyed, agitated blacks, shivering with terror and yet appreciative of the excitement; on the pillared gallery of the home-like two-storied white house a little group of horror-stricken

women, including Mrs. Garrett and Miss Holloway, her boarder. And from within the tobacco-house not a sound. At length, the ringing voice again:

“Who are you and what do you want?”

And from Baker the reply: “We want you; we want to take you prisoners.”

“Captain,” said the clear voice, every tone of which was distinguishable on the gallery, a hundred feet away, “I know you to be a brave man, and I believe you to be honourable. I am a cripple; I have got but one leg. If you will withdraw your men in line one hundred yards from the door I will come out and fight you.”

Baker replied that he had come not to fight but to capture; to which Booth said: “If you will take your men fifty yards from the door, I ’ll come out and fight you. Give me a chance for my life!”

Later, he offered to fight all the men singly, and when Baker again refused, the word came back: “Well, my brave boys, prepare a stretcher for me.”

Then Conger directed the Garrett boys to pile brush against the corners of the tobacco-house, and passed in and out among his men giving orders for the capture when the flames should force Booth and Herold out; above all, Booth must be taken alive, if possible.

Some one close to the tobacco-house heard Booth say

to his companion: "You damned coward, will you leave me now? Go! Go! I would not have you stay with me."

Booth then came to the door and announced: "There 's a man in here who wants to come out."

"Very well," said Baker, "let him hand his arms out and come."

Thereupon Herold came to the door and said: "Let me out."

"Hand out your arms," ordered Baker, "you carried a carbine and you must hand it out."

"The arms are mine," called Booth, "and I have got them. Upon the word and honour of a gentleman, this man has none. And I declare before my Maker that he is innocent of any crime whatever."

Herold was then ordered to put out his hands, they were manacled, and he was quickly dragged out, the door slammed behind him, and the easy prisoner hurried to a remote corner of the yard with a couple of cavalrymen to guard him.

Immediately Herold was secured, Conger went around to a corner of the tobacco-house, pulled a wisp of hay through a crack, set fire to it, and stuck it back. The hay was very dry and blazed almost instantly. Booth turned, when he heard it crackling, and seemed to be looking to see if he could put it out. Then, as if convinced





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### THE CAPTURE AND DEATH OF BOOTH

Booth and Herold were discovered hiding in the tobacco-house of Mr. Garrett, on the road to Bowling Green. The building was set afire to compel Booth to surrender, as it was intended to take him alive.



Collection of Mr. Robert Coster.

### BOOTH'S ESCAPE

Booth had a horse waiting for him, near the theatre, which he mounted and made his escape from the scene of his crime. He must have suffered keenly, as he had broken a bone in his leg in his leap from the box to the stage.

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that he could not, he started toward the door. At that moment a shot rang out. Boston Corbett, a trooper of the 16th New York, had lost his head, disobeyed orders, and fired through a crack with deadly aim.<sup>1</sup>

"He has shot himself!" was the instant thought of every one. Conger rushed into the barn and found Baker already there and raising Booth up. They discovered a wound in the neck, close to the back of the head, from which the blood was pouring freely.

Out on to the grass beneath the locust trees they dragged him, and there they left him for dead while they went back to see if the fire could be put out. It could not, and Conger left it and returned to Booth, whose eyes and lips were moving as if he wanted to speak. He was carried to the gallery, Miss Holloway fetched a pillow for his head, and dipped a rag in brandy and water to moisten his lips.

Presently he was able to articulate, and Conger bent over him to hear what he might say. "Tell mother — I die — for my — country," he gasped. "I did — what I thought — was — best."

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 94, 95, Boston Corbett. Corbett was a religious fanatic. According to *Harper's Weekly* for May 13, 1865, "he was a constant attendant of the Fulton Street Meeting, New York, and greatly annoyed it by what was considered his fanaticism." In 1887 Corbett was committed to an asylum for the insane in Kansas, from which he escaped. In 1901, according to Oldroyd (pp. 100, 101), he had for four years been a travelling salesman for a Topeka patent medicine concern, and "covered" Texas and Oklahoma, having his headquarters at Enid, Okla.

Conger repeated it after him and asked him if he had got it right, and Booth whispered "Yes." He motioned to Conger to put his hand on his throat, as if to help him cough, which Conger did, but Booth was unable to cough. Conger told him to open his mouth, and Booth, with difficulty, did; Conger looked in and said: "There is no blood in your throat."

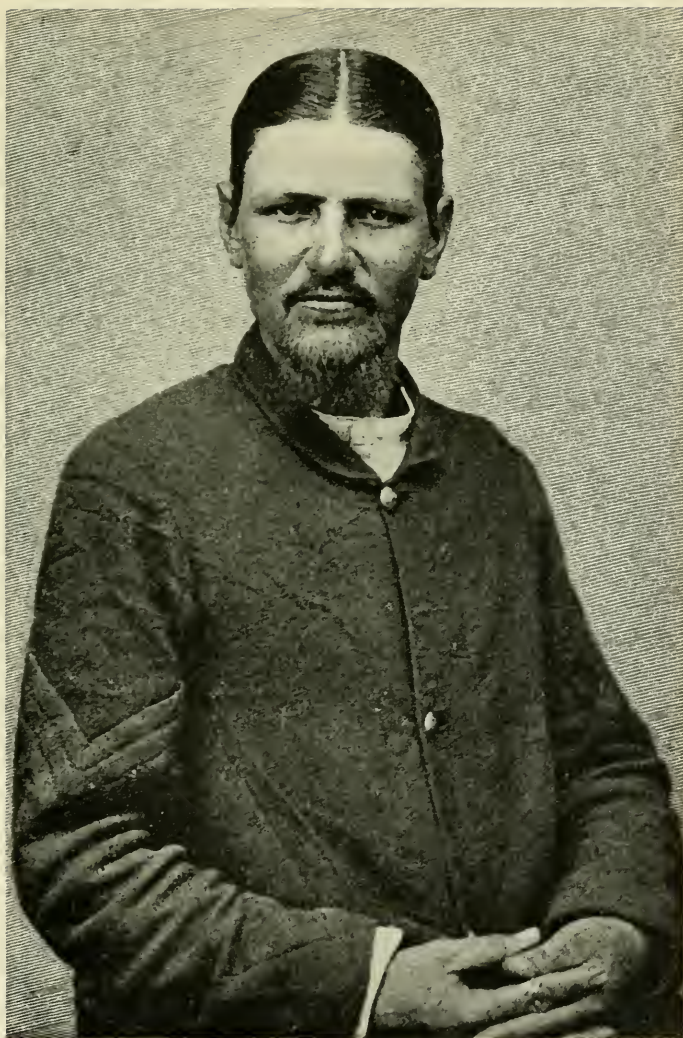
Conger then searched the dying man's pockets and took all they contained — the diary, a knife, a pipe, a little file, a pocket-compass smeared with candle-drippings, the bill of exchange bought in Montreal in October, etc. Booth whispered pleadingly, "Kill me, kill me."

"We don't want to kill you," Conger assured him, "we want you to get well."

Conger then left, telling Baker if Booth was not dead in an hour "to send over to Belle Plain for a surgeon from one of the gunships; if he died, to get the best conveyance he could and bring him on." Conger was in mad haste to get to Stanton and tell him that \$75,000 had been earned. He reached Washington at 5 P. M., and with Chief Baker went at once to Stanton to tell him the news. They thought to excite the grim war minister for once, but they were mistaken, he took the announcement quite stolidly.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 91-93. Conger.



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SERGEANT BOSTON CORBETT, 16TH N. Y. CAVALRY  
Who fired the shot that killed John Wilkes Booth.

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Corbett fired about 3.15 A.M. that Wednesday, the twenty-sixth of April. Booth lingered until half-past five; conscious to the last he must have been, the doctors who knew the nature of the wound said afterward, and suffering the most excruciating agony a human being can know.

Toward the end, as the dawn was breaking into brilliant day, he indicated by a look, a feeble motion, that he wanted his paralyzed arms raised so he could see his hands. This was done, and he said, very faintly, as he looked at them: "Useless — useless!"<sup>1</sup> Those were his last words. Whether he bemoaned the uselessness of his hands to fight for him, or the uselessness of their mad crime, God only knows. But he could not more accurately have epitomized his insane deed. Never — except Once — was vengeance so misdirected. Never was sacrifice of a brilliant young life so worse than "useless."

Five minutes after Booth died a country doctor arrived — in time to pronounce him dead. Very shortly thereafter the body was sewed up in an army blanket, strapped to a board, and put in the dilapidated old cart which a coloured man of the neighbourhood had used as an ambulance after the many bloody battles fought there-

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<sup>1</sup> Baker, p. 604; "The Assassin's Death" by George Alfred Townsend (Dick and Fitzgerald, New York, 1895), p. 37.



abouts. This decrepit vehicle, with its ghastly freight, was ferried across the Rappahannock at Port Royal and headed for Belle Plain where the *Ide* lay; Herold, manacled, rode behind his comrade's body.

About nine miles from Port Conway the old waggon broke, and was abandoned by the roadside; a new conveyance was procured, Belle Plain was reached, and the *Ide* got under way for Alexandria, where it arrived at twenty minutes to eleven that night.<sup>1</sup>

A tug was there, by Stanton's orders, to meet the *Ide*; on it were Conger and his chief, and to it were transferred the body of Booth and the person of Herold. At a quarter to two in the morning the tug came alongside the monitor *Montauk*, anchored off the Navy Yard; and Herold was put in double irons and placed in the hold, while the body of Booth was, on Baker's orders, kept on deck under a guard. The body was noted by the Commandant of the Navy Yard, when he saw it in the morning, to be changing rapidly, and he so apprised Secretary of the Navy Welles.

Secretary Welles accordingly issued an order permitting the following persons to board the *Montauk* and

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<sup>1</sup> Baker, pp. 505, 506. Baker copied extensively from the writings of Townsend, who as "Gath" was the newspaper correspondent most widely read of any who wrote of events connected with the assassination. Townsend was connected with the *New York World*, and as he seems to have taken stock in Baker (which few persons did) Baker's book is copiously drawn from Townsend's writings. Oldroyd also quotes extensively from Townsend.



see the body: Surgeon-General Barnes and his assistant, Judge-Advocate-General Holt and his assistant, Hon. John A. Bingham, Major Eckert and William Moore, of the War Department, the two Bakers and Conger, Gardner, the official photographer and his assistant, O'Sullivan, Dr. May, a Washington physician who two years before had removed a tumour from Booth's neck, and others.<sup>1</sup> One of Baker's men took on board a girl who had known Booth, and she cut a lock of hair from the dead man's head, but Baker, coming upon her, saw her, and took the hair away.<sup>2</sup>

"Immediately after the Surgeon-General has made his autopsy," Commandant Montgomery's orders read, "you will have the body placed in a strong box and deliver it to Colonel Baker, the box being carefully sealed." Thereupon the commandant gave orders to have the box made, and there was a scramble among the Navy Yard workmen for the privilege of driving a nail in the coffin of the President's murderer.<sup>3</sup>

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when General Barnes and his assistant cut from Booth's neck a small section — two spools — of the spine, through which

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<sup>1</sup> James Croggon in the *Washington Star*, January 5, 1907.

<sup>2</sup> Baker, pp. 507, 508.

<sup>3</sup> Told the present writer by Captain Beacham, an old employee of the Arsenal; also see Croggon in *Star* as above.

Corbett's ball had passed<sup>1</sup> and — the body having been fully identified, photographed, and officially attested dead — left the ironclad, together with most of those who had attended the autopsy.

At a quarter to three, without waiting for leave or licence, without stopping for the strong box or the seal, Colonel Baker lowered the limp body into a small row-boat and took it away, leaving the officers at the Navy Yard astonished at its sudden disappearance.

The boat was rowed down the Eastern branch and up the main stream of the Potomac, which bounds the city on the south. At the foot of Four-and-a-Half Street, on the river, was the Arsenal inclosure, with an old-fashioned penitentiary building, then used as an ordnance store-house, midway of the grounds. The party in the small boat steered for the Arsenal wharf and there, about four o'clock, the body of Booth was landed and laid on the wharf in charge of a sentry. It lay there until after nightfall, during which time Baker and Major Eckert, representing Stanton's office, conferred with Major Benton, Commandant of the Arsenal, about its disposition.

During the night it was carried into one of the cellar

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<sup>1</sup> This section of spinal column, and the bit of spinal cord, are now in the National Medical Museum, Washington. They are not marked with Booth's name, but were shown to the present writer by Dr. Lamb, of the museum. Dr. Lamb also answered the question of the skeleton in the Museum cellar, sometimes said to be that of Booth; it is Guiteau's.

storerooms of the old penitentiary, some bricks were removed from the floor, a grave was dug, the body was put in a gun box and covered with a blanket, the earth and then the bricks were hastily replaced, and the room was locked, the key being taken to Stanton by Major Eckert. That was where John Booth lay while rumours of his incineration, his burial at sea, his dismemberment, filled the air.<sup>1</sup>

A little after one o'clock on the morning of April 15th, Lieutenant John F. Toffey, going to the Lincoln Hospital where he was on duty, saw a dark-bay horse with saddle and bridle on, standing at Lincoln Branch Barracks, about three-quarters of a mile east of the Capitol and a mile west of the Navy Yard bridge. The sweat was pouring off the horse and had made a puddle on the ground; a sentinel at the hospital had stopped him, and when Lieutenant Toffey came he took the horse down to the Old Capitol Prison and thence to General Augur's headquarters where the animal was found to be blind of one eye.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Baker, p. 703; Croggon in the *Washington Star*, April 28, 1865, also January 5, 1907. Croggon's veracious account of Booth's burial was almost lost sight of in the wild stories that filled the public prints. *Frank Leslie's Weekly* for May 20, 1865, contained a full-page picture of the sinking of Booth's body in mid-Potomac at night, accompanied by the following note:

"The sketch below was furnished by one of the two officers employed in the duty of sinking the body of Booth in the middle of the Potomac. Although not authorized to divulge his name, I am able to vouch for the truth of the representation. F. LESLIE."

<sup>2</sup> C. T. pp. 159-160, John F. Toffey

It was the horse John Booth had bought in November, of George Gardiner, Dr. Mudd's neighbour. It had carried Lewis Payne to Secretary Seward's house on the night of the 14th, a little before ten o'clock; had ridden off at a mad gallop with him up Vermont Avenue and thence, by some route we cannot trace, toward the Navy Yard bridge. Somewhere or other the horse threw its rider and went galloping on until stopped by the hospital guard.

Sunday afternoon, in a piece of woods between Fort Bunker Hill and Fort Saratoga, three miles from the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, Thomas Price picked up Payne's coat.<sup>1</sup> Where the boy was between midnight or earlier on Friday and midnight on the Monday following, we do not know, but no one seems to have seen him in that time. He does not seem to have made any effort to escape, nor could it be learned that he had applied to any one for food. He was probably lying in the bushes, somewhere within a very few miles of the scene of his crime. And after nightfall on Monday he got up and wandered back into Washington.

About three o'clock Saturday morning, while the President lay dying, detectives James DeWitt, John Clarvoe, and others, pulled violently at the door-bell of

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 158, Thomas Price.

Mrs. Surratt's house, and after a brief wait on the steps the door was opened by Louis Weichmann, to whom the detectives said they had come to search the house for John Wilkes Booth and John H. Surratt.<sup>1</sup>

Weichmann said he didn't inquire why they were searching until they reached his room, when they told him that Booth had murdered the President and Surratt the Secretary of State; to which Weichmann replied that the latter, at least, must be a mistake, for Surratt was in Canada, and had been for ten days. He then went downstairs with the detectives, he said, and met Mrs. Surratt coming out of her room, which was the back parlour. Weichmann told her about Booth, and said she exclaimed: "My God, Mr. Weichmann! you don't tell me so." She told the detectives her son was in Canada, whence she had received a letter from him only the day before. On Weichmann's promise to report at detective headquarters at eight o'clock, the detectives left.

Immediately after breakfast Weichmann went to police headquarters on Tenth Street near E, only a stone's throw from Ford's Theatre.<sup>2</sup> He did not again return to the Surratt house, except to get his personal belongings. Later in the day he went over into Maryland with the detectives, and was close on the trail of the

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 116, Weichmann; p. 140, Holohan, James McDevitt.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 119, Weichmann.

fugitives without knowing it. Sunday he accompanied the detectives to Baltimore, returning that night. While they were in Baltimore, the War Department issued an order for them to go to Montreal to see if they could find Surratt. It was April 29th when they returned, Weichmann going to a boarding-house close by the War Office which kept in constant communication with him. Sunday morning, the thirtieth of April, Weichmann was taken to see Stanton, who subjected him to a cross-questioning lasting two hours, at the conclusion of which Weichmann was told he would have to be held in custody. He was turned over to Baker, who took him to Carroll Prison. On May 13th he took the stand at the trial and swore away the life of Mary E. Surratt.<sup>1</sup>

Weichmann's testimony at police headquarters on Saturday morning must not immediately have implicated Mrs. Surratt, for no attempt to arrest her was made until midnight on Monday. If what he said of her was true, he must have managed to guard it against the "sweating" of Major Richards, Superintendent of Police; if it was concocted, he evidently did not feel the pressure which made a false witness of him until afterward. If he did not see Stanton until April 30th, he quite certainly saw on April 17th some one representing

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<sup>1</sup> S. T. vol. i, pp. 395-399.

Stanton's office, and on that night the War Department, not the city police, arrested Mrs. Surratt.

It was 11.20 that Monday night when Colonel Olcott, special commissioner of the War Department, ordered R. G. Morgan of the department to go to Mrs. Surratt's house and superintend the seizing of papers and the arrest of the household. He arrived there about half-past eleven, and found Major W. H. Smith, Lieutenant John W. Dempsey, Captain W. M. Wermerskirch, and others, already there; they had arrived about ten minutes before.

When Major Smith rang the bell, Mrs. Surratt came to the parlour window and asked: "Is that you, Mr. Kirby?" She was told it was not Mr. Kirby, and ordered to open the door, which she did. Asked if she were the mother of John H. Surratt, Jr., she said "I am." Whereupon Major Smith said: "I come to arrest you and all in your house, and take you for examination to General Augur's headquarters."<sup>1</sup>

Incriminating circumstance was made of her failure to ask the reason for her arrest, but as she knew her son was suspected of the attempt to murder Secretary Seward, and that her household was under suspicion on account of Booth's visits there, it hardly seems very damning that the frightened woman asked no questions.

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 121, 124, Smith, Morgan, Wermerskirch, Dempsey.

It was a household of women solely, including Miss Anna Surratt, Miss Olivia Jenkins — Mrs. Surratt's sister, who had been visiting her for some time — and Miss Honora Fitzpatrick, a boarder. The Holohan family had taken fright at the detectives' appearance Saturday morning, and had moved to other quarters on Sunday.

As soon as Morgan arrived he sent out for a carriage to take the four agitated women to General Augur's headquarters, and while they were waiting for this there came a knock and a ring at the door. Morgan and Wermerskirch opened the door, and Lewis Payne stepped into the hall. He was grimed and fouled from his three days and three nights in hiding — unshaven and wild-eyed, and mud to his knees. He had been hatless since he left Seward's house, and over his matted hair had drawn a piece of gray knitted wool evidently torn from a sleeve of his shirt or a leg of his under-drawers. On his shoulder he carried a pick.

When he saw the officers Payne said quickly: "I guess I am mistaken." Asked whom he wished to see, he said Mrs. Surratt, and was told he was in the right place and bidden to walk in. Morgan asked him what he came there at that time of night for, and he said Mrs. Surratt had sent for him to dig a gutter. He was re-



minded that this was a strange hour to come to work, and he said he had not come to work, only to inquire at what hour he would be wanted in the morning. Morgan asked him a number of questions to which Payne returned faltering, evidently fabricated, answers. Major Smith then called Mrs. Surratt to the parlour door and asked her if she knew this man. She peered short-sightedly into the dim hall, scanning the rough-looking man, then raised her hand and said: "Before God, I never saw him before." Payne said nothing. Major Smith then told Payne he was a suspicious character and must be placed under arrest.

The carriage had come, and Mrs. Surratt was ordered to fetch the bonnets and shawls of the women; which she did, under guard. When she had returned to the parlour and they were ready to go, she asked permission to kneel down and pray.<sup>1</sup> This was granted, and she knelt for a minute or two. Then she and the others went quietly down the steps, entered the carriage, and were driven to General Augur's headquarters, and from there, after a long cross-questioning, to the square containing Carroll and Old Capitol Prisons. Mrs. Surratt was confined temporarily in the latter, and transferred thence to one of the monitors; the three other women were assigned to Car<sup>quite</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 121-124.

Miss Anna begged piteously to be allowed to share her mother's prison, but was refused.

When the carriage that took them away returned to H Street, Morgan put Payne into it, in charge of Thomas Samson and Charles N. Roach, and it was again driven to General Augur's, whence Payne was taken, later that morning, to the monitor *Saugus*, where he was put in double irons in the hold.<sup>1</sup>

Sam Arnold was arrested at Fortress Monroe on Monday morning, being the first conspirator captured. He had been clerking in a sutler's store outside the fort for two weeks, and sleeping in a room back of the store. He had not been away from the store since April 1st, but he was hurried to Washington, heavily ironed, and on Wednesday was put in the hold of the *Saugus* along with Payne. Any remote likelihood of the prisoners communicating with each other was reduced to impossibility by "a canvas bag put on the head of each, and tied around the neck, with a hole for proper breathing and eating, but not seeing."<sup>2</sup> All the prisoners with the exception of Mrs. Surratt wore these bags during their confinement on the monitors and in the penitentiary, although the hot days of spring and summer; all wore the irons, and, in addition to these, Payne was chained Surratt

<sup>1</sup> No. 99, 30th Congress, First Session; see Appendix XXVI: Note on Awards. *Illustrated Weekly*, May 27, 1865.

down. No one was allowed to communicate with any prisoner, except on order signed by both the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy.

O'Laughlin was also arrested on Monday, in Baltimore, though not at his home. He had gone to Washington on Thursday to see the illumination and parades, and returned to his home (which was with his brother-in-law, P. H. Maulsby, at 57 North Exeter Street) about seven o'clock Saturday evening. Detectives had already been there looking for him, and when O'Laughlin heard this he told Maulsby that he would not stay at home to be arrested as it would kill his mother, but would go to the house of a friend named Bailey, on High Street, whither Maulsby took the detectives on Monday morning.<sup>1</sup> On Wednesday O'Laughlin joined the hooded, manacled colony on the *Saugus*; on the seventh of July he went to the Dry Tortugas for a life term; and on the twenty-third of September, 1867, he died there of yellow fever.

On what information Arnold and O'Laughlin were arrested so promptly the records do not tell us; but John Surratt's explanation makes it clear; he said, in his Rockville lecture of December 8, 1870, that the abduction plot was known to the Government detectives, who quite

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 232, Maulsby; p. 221, Wallace.

naturally jumped to the conclusion that the men involved in it were those implicated in the President's murder.

Edward Spangler, the scene-shifter, was also in Monday's drag-net. He was arrested late in the day at the house on the southeast corner of Seventh and H Streets, where he took his meals. Spangler slept at the theatre, but he had a carpet-bag at the boarding-house. This, when taken in evidence by the detectives, revealed damaging contents as follows: One piece of rope eighty feet long (probably purloined from the theatre for the purpose of crab-fishing, which was Spangler's favourite pastime), some blank paper, and a dirty shirt-collar.<sup>1</sup> What landed Spangler in irons was the excited statement of two coloured women living in the alley back of the theatre, to the effect that Booth had called "Ned" when he brought his horse to the stage-door on the fateful night; also the story of "Peanuts," John Miles, a coloured boy, and Sleichmann, a stage-hand, about "Ned" handing over Booth's horse to Burroughs; and the charge of Jake Ritterspauagh, another scene-shifter, that when Booth made his flight across the stage and out the door into the alley, Spangler said to Ritterspauagh: "Don't say which way he went."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 98, William Eaton, Charles H. Rosch.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. pp. 73-76, 81, 97, Sleichmann, Burroughs, Turner, Anderson, Miles, Ritterspauagh.

Spangler was taken first to the Old Capitol Prison, along with the other Ford's Theatre folk herded there on general suspicion; but as the story of what he said to Ritterspaugh grew and grew with every re-telling, it began to look as if the scene-shifter who had done hostler work for "Mr. John" must be a very bad man indeed, and he was transferred to the monitor and ironed and hooded like the rest.

At ten o'clock Friday night, April 14th, Atzerodt left the oyster bay to which he had returned after the meeting at the Herndon House whereat he had refused to kill Johnson, and went to Naylor's stable for his horse. He asked foreman Fletcher to go with him to the Union Hotel near by — at E and Thirteen-and-a-Half Streets — and take a drink. This they did, returning afterward to the stable, where Fletcher complained to Atzerodt of Davy Herold staying so late with the horse he had hired. "Oh, he'll be back after a while," said Atzerodt, and left, going to the Kirkwood House where he had registered that morning. He stayed there but a few moments, came out and mounted his horse and rode it to Keleher's stable at Eighth and E Streets, where he had hired it earlier in the day. It was about eleven o'clock when he returned the horse, and between 11.30 and twelve he got on a Navy Yard car at Sixth Street and the Avenue

and was spoken to by Washington Briscoe, who had known him for seven or eight years. Briscoe asked Atzerodt if he had heard the news (meaning, of course, the news of the President's assassination) and Atzerodt said he had; he seemed very much excited, and begged Briscoe to let him sleep with him at the Navy Yard, where Briscoe had a store in which he lived. This Briscoe refused, and Atzerodt got out of the car with him at Garrison and I Streets and waited with him till the car came back on its return trip, when Atzerodt boarded it.<sup>1</sup>

Where he was for the next two hours we do not know, but about 2.30 A. M. he went to the Pennsylvania House where he had stopped several times, the last time so lately as Wednesday night. With him, either by accident or by design, was a rather small, shabby, weather-beaten man, quite dark-complexioned, who gave his name as Samuel Thomas, paid in advance for a night's lodging, and was shown with Atzerodt to a room with six beds in it. At four o'clock another lodger was brought to this room — No. 53 — and went to bed; his name was Lieutenant W.R. Keim, and as he was undressing he spoke to Atzerodt, with whom he had shared a room at this house before, asking if he had heard of the assassination. Atzerodt said yes, and added that it was "an awful thing."

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. p. 146, Washington Briscoe, John Fletcher.

The man Thomas left the hotel at five in the morning, asking the way to the depot and apparently bound for the 6.15 A. M. train. Atzerodt left about six.<sup>1</sup> At eight, or thereabouts, he was in Georgetown, where he borrowed of John Caldwell, a man he knew, ten dollars, giving his revolver (bought only a month ago) as security.<sup>2</sup> At ten or eleven Sunday morning Atzerodt had reached the neighbourhood of Barnsville, Montgomery County, Maryland, about twenty-two miles from Washington. Here, when the rumoured assassination of General Grant was mentioned, Atzerodt is reported to have said something that sounded like "If the man that was to follow him has followed him, it is likely to be so." This was said in the house of a man named Hezekiah Metz, to whose daughter Atzerodt had been paying his addresses. That day, however, Miss Metz turned such a cold shoulder on her admirer that he did not stay long, but went, about two o'clock, to the house of his cousin, Hartman Richter, who lived near by. There he stayed until he was dragged out of bed and arrested at four o'clock in the morning of Thursday, April 20th; Richter was also arrested.<sup>3</sup>

The arrest was made by Sergeant L. W. Gemmill of the First Delaware Cavalry, with a detail of six men from his

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 146-147, John Greenwalt, James Walker, Lieut. Keim.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 148, John Caldwell.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 149, Hezekiah Metz, Sergeant L. W. Gemmill.

regiment, and a grateful Government paid \$25,000 for this daring "capture."<sup>1</sup>

When in irons on the *Montauk*, to which he was transferred from the *Saugus* on Stanton's orders, April 21st, Atzerodt asked to see James L. McPhail, Provost-Marshal of the State of Maryland, on whose force was a brother-in-law of Atzerodt's, while a brother of his had been on it but was not now. These two men urged on McPhail that Atzerodt wished to see him, and McPhail got a pass admitting him to the *Montauk*, where he heard Atzerodt's statement.<sup>2</sup> Atzerodt also made a statement to Captain Frank Monroe, U. S. N., who had charge of him on board the monitor. The statements he made were used in the tracking of Booth and Herold, but were not allowed in evidence to save his own life.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Mudd was arrested on Friday, April 21st, by detectives Lovett, Gavacan, Williams, and Lloyd, and taken to Bryantown; he was allowed to go home that night on his promise to return the next morning. On Monday he was taken to Washington, where he was confined first in Carroll Prison.<sup>4</sup>

With the arrival in Washington of Herold, in the very

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<sup>1</sup> Report No. 99, 39th Congress, First Session, Committee of Claims.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. p. 148, Marshal McPhail.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. p. 150, Captain Monroe, U. S. N.

<sup>4</sup> C. T. pp. 87-90, 168, Lovett, Dana, Williams, Gavacan, Lloyd, Wells; "Life of Dr. Mudd," p. 34.



early morning of April 27th, the rounding up of those to be tried for conspiracy to murder President Lincoln, Vice-President Johnson, Lieutenant-General Grant, and Secretaries Seward and Stanton, was complete. The prisons were full of suspects who might later be tried as accessories, but for the present at least trial would proceed against Herold, Atzerodt, Payne, O'Laughlin, Arnold, Mrs. Surratt, and Dr. Mudd.

On the first day of May, the Attorney-General (Speed) having given it as his opinion that these persons were "subject to the jurisdiction of, and lawfully triable before, a Military Commission," President Johnson ordered that the assistant Adjutant-General detail nine competent military officers to serve as such a Commission; that the trial be conducted by the Judge-Advocate-General (Joseph E. Holt) in person, aided by his assistant and such special Judge-Advocates as he might designate; and that Brevet-Major-General Hartranft be assigned to duty as special Provost-Marshal-General for the trial.

On May 6th the assistant Adjutant-General, W. A. Nichols, appointed Major-Generals David Hunter and Lewis Wallace, Brevet-Major-Generals August V. Kautz, Brigadier-Generals Albion P. Howe, Robert S. Foster, and T. M. Harris, Brevet-Brigadier-General Cyrus B. Comstock, Brevet-Colonel Horace Porter, and

Lieutenant-Colonel David R. Clendenin, to serve as Commissioners.

May 9th General Comstock and Colonel Porter were relieved from duty, and Brevet-Brigadier-General James A. Ekin and Brevet-Colonel C. H. Tompkins assigned to duty in their places respectively.

On that day the Commission was sworn, various other legal preliminaries not interesting to the lay mind were got through with, and the prisoners were arraigned on a wordy charge and specification, the sum and substance of which was that they had "combined, confederated, and conspired," together with John Surratt, John Wilkes Booth the "Canada Cabinet," and the President and other high officials of the Confederacy, and with "others unknown," to kill Lincoln, Johnson, Grant, Seward, and Stanton.

All the prisoners at the bar pleaded to this charge and specification "Not Guilty," whereupon the Commission adjourned to meet on Thursday morning, May 11th, at ten o'clock A. M.<sup>1</sup>

On April 29th the prisoners on the ironclads had been transferred from the custody of Commodore Montgomery, Commandant of the Navy Yard, to that of General Hancock, in command of the defences of the capital. General Hancock ordered them confined in cells on the

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 17-23; O. R. Series II, vol. viii, p. 699.



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**THE MILITARY COURT THAT TRIED THE ASSASSINS**  
(The individual names will be found on pages 171-172.)

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P

third floor of the old penitentiary building in the Arsenal grounds, under the cellar floor of which John Booth had then for two nights and a day been sleeping. This building, erected in 1836, had not been used for a prison since the breaking out of the war, when the convicts then confined there were sent to Albany, N. Y.

That there might be as little difficulty as possible in getting the heavily-manacled prisoners from their cells to the court room, it was determined to fit up for the trial a room close by the cells. This room was 30 by 45 feet, with a ceiling not more than eleven feet high, and had only four windows, which were covered with a thick iron grating. The room was whitewashed for the occasion, new tables and chairs were bought, and a prisoners' dock was built along the western end of the room. This dock was a platform about four feet broad and raised some twelve inches from the floor. It had a strong railing in front of it, entirely separating the prisoners from all in the room. Near the south end of the wall against which this was built was the door leading to the corridor on which were the cells.<sup>1</sup>

Each prisoner was confined in a separate cell under four guards; all, except Mrs. Surratt, wore bags of rough gray flannel over their heads — replacing the canvas sacks

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<sup>1</sup> *Washington Star*, May 12, 1865; *Frank Leslie's Weekly*, May 27, 1865; *Harper's Weekly*, June 3, 1865. See Appendix XXVII: Note on curious crowds at trial.

of the monitors — tied under their chins, with a single slit in them over the mouth. In addition, each wore handcuffs fastened together by a bar of iron fourteen inches long; and on the left ankle a shackle with a two-foot chain to the other end of which was fastened a cone-shaped iron weight of about 75 pounds. This being deemed insufficient in the cases of Payne and Atzerodt, some further weight and hindrance of ball and chain was attached to them.<sup>1</sup>

When they shuffled into the prisoners' dock with seven soldiers, separating each one of them from his nearest neighbours, they were further restrained by an iron bar which fastened them all together by passing through a hole in the apex of each of the 75-pound weights. Their hoods were removed when they were taken into court.

As they entered the door at the corner of their dock, Arnold came first, then a soldier, then Dr. Mudd, then a soldier, then Spangler, a soldier, O'Laughlin, a soldier, Atzerodt, a soldier, Payne, a soldier, Herold, a soldier; last came Mrs. Surratt, always heavily veiled. She sat a little apart from her fellow prisoners, at the extreme left of the dock as the spectators faced it. As she sat in her corner this is what she saw: In front of the railing of the dock two tables, at which the prisoners' counsel

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<sup>1</sup> *Leslie's Weekly*, May 27, 1865.

sat. Over near a window about the centre of the room's north side (to her left) the seat of the Judge-Advocate-General and his assistants. In front of them a long table, around which sat the nine members of the Military Commission, each in the full uniform of his rank, General Hunter, President of the Commission, at the eastern end of the table, facing the prisoners. The main entrance to the court-room was behind General Hunter, in the north-east corner of the room, diagonally opposite Mrs. Surratt. Down the centre of the room were three wooden pillars supporting the ceiling. Between pillars one and two (reckoning from the dock) there was a table where the official stenographers sat, and beyond that and very close to it the witness stand. Then came the second pillar, and beyond that another table used by the court for various purposes. Beyond the third pillar was a wooden box in which were kept various articles used in evidence: Booth's slit boot found at Dr. Mudd's, his saddle discovered on Cox's farm where his horse was shot, the things taken from his pockets by Conger — all but the diary! — and the little Deringer picked up off the floor of the box after he jumped; Payne's compass seized by his "captors," and his boot with Booth's name faintly discernible in it; knives which Payne and Atzerodt threw away; Spangler's piece of crabbing-rope, etc. Balancing the table of the Commissioners,

on the south side of the room, was the press table; at the far east end of the room were a few chairs for spectators.

Hon. Reverdy Johnson, Maryland's most prominent lawyer and statesman, volunteered his services in the defence of Mrs. Surratt, whom he had never seen until he visited her in prison on May 12th and in a talk with her became convinced of her innocence. She was further represented by Frederick Aiken and John W. Clappitt. Dr. Mudd had the extremely able counsel of General Thomas Ewing, a distinguished officer of the Union army, brother-in-law of General Sherman, and an excellent lawyer; also the assistance of Mr. Frederick Stone, who further represented Herold; while General Ewing was also chief counsel for Arnold and Spangler. Payne and Atzerodt were represented by a brilliant legal orator, William E. Doster. Walter S. Cox had charge of O'Laughlin's case. Each of the accused made a motion for a separate trial, but it was in each instance refused.

The taking of testimony began Friday morning, May 12th, Lieutenant-General Grant being one of the first witnesses.

The penitentiary was nearest to the city side of the Arsenal grounds, and farthest from the river side. Four-and-a-half Street ends at the Arsenal gate, and in those days it ran straight into the old prison gate and ended there



actually though not technically; because in the extension northward of the Arsenal grounds in '61, the bit of Four-and-a-half Street which was taken in then became an Arsenal road.

Not many sounds went floating up to those four grated windows of the court-room, but the warmth of spring and presently the heat of summer came stealing through before the long sessions were over. With anywhere upward of fifty persons occupying a space 30x45 feet under an 11-foot ceiling, the air must always have been heavy, drowsy.

Outside, in Washington, was springtime, such riot of springtime as only the beautiful Capital City knows. One wonders if, as the long sessions wore on, Davy Herold's mind did not sometimes wander from these questions of life and death — practically certain death to him — to the open country where he so dearly loved to ride; if Spangler did not think wistfully of the crab-fishing that was going on pleausrably, unmindful of his changed estate; if the Florida boy whose life had been lived out of doors never sighed for a breath of spring, for a smell of moist, fruitful earth.

And, down beneath the bricks of the cellar floor in this same grim building, lay all that was mortal of beautiful John Booth, his clustering curls matted with blood and his winsome smile forever set in the agony of an awful death.

It is doubtful if ever in the history of jurisprudence a trial has been held in which justice was more difficult to approximate. First of all, there was sectional feeling, which had been running high for years, higher for the last four years, and was now lashed into its highest fury by the common belief that the Confederate leaders were responsible for Lincoln's death. Then there was the natural rage against the alleged slayers of a beloved ruler, accentuated by the manner and the moment of that ruler's taking off. Thirdly, there was politics, by reason of the fact that the prisoners were believed to be affiliated with that secret organization known as "Sons of Liberty," which was opposed to the war, in league with the Democrats, supported McClellan, and was deemed by most ardent Republicans treasonable and treacherous. There was a religious bitterness, too. The Surratts were Catholics, Dr. Mudd was a Catholic, O'Laughlin was a Catholic, and the report gained wide currency that all of those apprehended were of the Roman communion and that the Church of Rome had planned the slaughter of the President. Another factor was the great rewards offered for the apprehension of Booth, Herold, Atzerodt, Payne, and John Surratt. And lastly, in addition to all the usual things which tend to defeat the ends of justice in a criminal trial, there was the extraordinary notoriety to be gained by

sensational testimony at any of the sessions whose least word (when the court allowed) was published far and wide and discussed as almost never before or since has trial evidence been discussed.

There were witnesses who would swear anything to prove that the crime was chargeable to Jefferson Davis, to the Democrats, to the Catholics; there were witnesses who would swear anything to get the rewards or the notoriety; there were witnesses who were anxious chiefly to prove the important parts they played; and witnesses who, not daring to hope they might prove themselves important, had perforce to be content with disproving the fancied importance of some one else. There were excitable witnesses who thought they saw things we know they could never have seen; suborned witnesses who were willing to have seen anything, for a consideration; intimidated witnesses, anxious to save their own skins; and so on.

The trial, which seems hideously unfair to us now, was probably as fair as a trial could be in those circumstances, in those times. From the point of view of the prisoners it was inhuman. But from the point of view of the frenzied North it seemed quite equitable. There are many things which may safely be remembered to-day in extenuation of some at least, if not of all, of the prisoners, that doubt-

less had, in the wide interests of the Nation, to be disregarded then.

It was, for instance, feared by many in the North that the war was not really over; that on the slightest relaxation of severity in the attitude of the victors the vanquished would again resort to arms — not as Confederate States again, perhaps, but as separate armed bodies, engaged here and there, as the spirit of revolt moved them, in guerrilla warfare.

The outraged North cried loudly for vengeance — forgetting how he hated vengeance for whose sake they desired it — and those in authority had their ears to the ground. Stanton, the relentless, hated anything that defied his iron rule, hated the “treacherous and dangerous enemy” he had worked so ceaselessly to subdue; he hated Southern women in particular, and he hated all Catholics in general. Judge-Advocate-General Holt was an especial alarmist on the “Sons of Liberty,”<sup>1</sup> and could never quite forgive Lincoln for treating them as a joke. Johnson was zealous to show himself righteously incensed by the crime that made him President, and the best way he could do this and

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<sup>1</sup> See Holt's alarmed letter to Stanton, published in the New York *Tribune*, October 17, 1864. Holt recommended the hanging of Horsey, Milligan, and Bowles, sentenced in the Indiana Treason Trial, on December 18, 1864; but Lincoln refused to take action against these “Sons of Liberty,” and on April 3, 1866, the United States Supreme Court declared sentence by a military commission illegal, and the men were freed. See Rhodes, vol. v., pp. 316-320. Nicolay and Hay, vol. viii., pp. 8 *et seq.* Indianapolis Treason Trials, reported by Pitman, published by Moore, Wiltach and Baldwin.

put down the feeling that his hands were not quite clean, was to lend what authority of his office was needed to a rigorous prosecution.

The public prints were full of inflammatory articles — quite comical to read now — which represented that oddly assorted little band of prisoners as the most desperate and bloodthirsty villains that ever menaced the safety of a nation. Pictures were taken of them as they looked after days of hideous confinement in the holds of the monitors, and hair-raising tales were freely circulated about them. Here and there throughout the country were a few persons who knew different — who had known these young men and that motherly, neighbourly matron, and knew that, whatever might be proved against them in this great crime, nothing could alter the entire humanness of their simple lives hitherto. But these were few compared to the millions who believed, as they were told, otherwise; their feeble voices of pleading defence were lost in the tumultuous crying for blood.

Under these conditions the trial went forward, while the only heart that could have inspired a great forgivingness lay still in Oak Ridge Cemetery at Springfield, Illinois. A good part of the first few days was taken up with a weak attempt to implicate the Confederate leaders. There is fair reason to believe that members of the “Canada

Cabinet" knew of Booth's plans for the abduction of President Lincoln, but none whatever to show that they plotted his death. Much of the testimony that attempted to prove them guilty of such conspiracy was later proved perjury.<sup>1</sup>

Not much could be urged in Davy Herold's behalf, not much in Lewis Payne's. Davy was with Booth in his flight, and if he had not conspired with him, at least he came within the death penalty under Stanton's proclamation of April 20th, declaring "all persons harbouring or secreting" Booth, Surratt, or Herold, "or either of them, or aiding or assisting their concealment or escape, will be treated as accomplices in the murder of the President and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State, and shall be subject to trial before a Military Commission and the punishment of death."<sup>2</sup>

And the Florida boy made no defence, nor could any be made for him. It was not his fault, but the over-ruling of Providence, that he did not leave five dead behind him in the Seward household. Not that five dead were any great matter, though, to this boy of not quite twenty, who had been through the carnage of Chancellorsville, Antietam,

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<sup>1</sup> See "The Judicial Murder of Mary E. Surratt," by David Miller DeWitt, published by J. Murphy, Baltimore, 1895; also Rogers's Minority Report, House Committee on Assassination, Report No. 104, 39th Congress, First Session. See Appendix III: Note on Confederate complicity.

<sup>2</sup> O. R. Series I, vol. xlvi., part iii., p. 847.

Gettysburg; not that it seemed unsoldierlike to him to go single-handed into the home of one of the nation's heads, and strike as for four years he had struck in battle at the nation's defenders. Mr. Doster pleaded eloquently for the boy; pleaded the responsibility of the Nation that had allowed him to go to school, first to slavery and then to war, and that ought to give him one better chance before sending him out of the world. To all this the boy listened apathetically. He was willing, yes, eager, to die; his sole cause for anguish was that he believed himself responsible, by his midnight return to her house, for the probable doom of Mrs. Surratt.

It could be said for Atzerodt that if he had undertaken to "lie in wait for Andrew Johnson with the intent unlawfully and maliciously to kill and murder him," he had not been very indefatigable about it, for the said Andrew Johnson was lying drunk in his room all evening, and Atzerodt was not, according to the evidence, in the Kirkwood House during that whole time except for five minutes.<sup>1</sup> It could not, however, be proved that he was without guilty knowledge of the plot to kill the President and the Secretary of State, and while that was not the charge against him it was probably the charge on which he was actually, though

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<sup>1</sup> The room rented by Atzerodt was in a different wing from that in which the Vice-President lodged, and removed by many perplexing turns and four flights of stairs from the quarters of Andrew Johnson.

not technically, convicted. For more than two hours before Booth and Payne committed their crimes Atzerodt, by his own confession, knew their intent. Personal cowardice kept him from performing his allotted share, and if he hated bloodshed enough to refuse participation in it, he did not hate it enough to forestall it by giving warning against the designs of his friends.

There was no great pother about the death sentence on these three. Lewis Payne was friendless in the Capital and in all the North, practically. Atzerodt, the carriage-painter, had none to make violent outcry over his fate. Davy Herold had a widowed mother and seven sisters whose hearts broke over him, and a lot of old schoolmates who marvelled sadly at the awful thing in which bright, likable Davy was overtaken.<sup>1</sup> But there was no loud outcry. That was reserved principally for Mrs. Surratt and, after her, for Dr. Mudd.

Dr. Mudd (who was thirty-two years old, and not forty-five as commonly represented)<sup>2</sup> was a cultivated, kindly Christian gentleman, a hard-working country

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<sup>1</sup> The present writer has talked with many men who knew Davy Herold well, and liked him well — including Rear-Admiral George N. Baird, U. S. N., Retired, who went to school with Davy, and Mr. Walter Burton who was a frequent and intimate caller on Davy's sisters, and saw much of Davy at home as well as at the National Hotel.

<sup>2</sup> He was born on his father's large plantation in Charles County, Maryland, on December 20, 1833. He was a graduate of Georgetown College and, in 1856, of the school of medicine and surgery of the University of Maryland, at Baltimore. He was married on November 26, 1857, to his childhood sweetheart, Miss Sarah Francis Dyer.



practitioner, a devoted young husband and father, a good son and brother. There was not a particle of evidence that he knew anything of the plot to kill, although he probably knew of the earlier plot to capture. If he recognized Booth when the assassin was at his house, it was before he had heard of Booth's mad deed; and if he "aided or assisted" in his "concealment or escape," it was five days before Stanton's proclamation made that treasonable. There was nothing to show that Booth had told Dr. Mudd of his crime, and everything to show that he had not. Nevertheless, Dr. Mudd, after suffering all the horrors of brutal imprisonment while trial was pending and in progress, was sentenced for life to the Dry Tortugas, an island of absolute barrenness more than one hundred miles from the nearest point of mainland in Florida. On this island is the largest, most expensive, and most useless fortification of masonry the United States has ever built. Dr. Mudd was allowed to see his wife but once after his arrest, and that was on the sixth of July, the day before the execution of four of his fellows and a day or two before his departure with the three others for Dry Tortugas. The scaffold was being erected when Mrs. Mudd entered the penitentiary yard, and as she was leaving she saw poor Anna Surratt come to bid her mother good-bye. Guards were present at

the brief interview between husband and wife, and in the presence of soldiers they parted — forever, by the terms of his sentence.<sup>1</sup>

Arnold<sup>2</sup> and O'Laughlin<sup>3</sup> also received life sentences, and Spangler was sentenced for six years.<sup>4</sup>

Mrs. Surratt's case excited the country more than all the others together. She was a woman, she was widowed of her natural defender, she was a mother. She was highly educated, refined, a Christian, and had hitherto led a blameless life.

The charges against her were made by Weichmann — whom she had treated as a son and who, by his reputed confession and by a world of evidence, probably turned State's evidence in fear and to save his own neck; and by her tenant, Lloyd, who admitted that he was drunk on the day when Mrs. Surratt said to him certain things he repeated against her, a month later, to her undoing, and who was not able to recall any of these things until they promised to be worth a part of \$75,000;<sup>5</sup> and by

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<sup>1</sup> "Life of Dr. Mudd," p. 40. Dr. Mudd was pardoned by President Johnson on February 13, 1869, released from prison March 8th, reached home March 20th. He was thirty-five years old then, a frail, broken, almost destitute man. He died of pneumonia on January 10, 1883, and was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery, at Bryantown Church, where he first met Booth.

<sup>2</sup> Arnold was also pardoned by President Johnson, February 13, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> At the time the pardons were issued to Mudd, Arnold and Spangler, an order was given for the disinterment of O'Laughlin's remains and their delivery to his mother.

<sup>4</sup> Spangler lived only eighteen months after his release, being cared for during all that time by Dr. Mudd. For Spangler's statement, see Appendix XXVIII.

<sup>5</sup> C. T. p. 87, Lloyd.

the officers at her arrest who repeated against her her declaration that she had never before seen Payne.<sup>1</sup>

The incontrovertible evidence against Mrs. Surratt was that for about three months before the assassination John Booth had been a frequent caller at her house; that Payne had twice in the month of March stayed there — once over night only, the other time for two or three days; that Atzerodt had several times spent a night there.<sup>2</sup> There was no evidence that Arnold, O'Laughlin, Mudd, or Spangler had ever been there, and slight evidence to show that Davy Herold had ever gone there. Incontrovertible, too, was the fact that Booth called on Mrs. Surratt soon after he projected the murder, on Friday afternoon about two o'clock, and that she went soon thereafter to Surrattsville.<sup>3</sup> But there was nothing in any of this to hang a woman; and by every count there was exactly as much against Weichmann as against Mrs. Surratt. There was no reason why he should not have been tried and hanged, except that he was given immunity for his evidence.<sup>4</sup>

Probable evidence against Mrs. Surratt tends to prove

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<sup>1</sup> C. T. pp. 121-123, Smith, Wermerskirch.

<sup>2</sup> C. T. pp. 121, 130-135, Miss Fitzpatrick, Anna Surratt, Mrs. Holohan, Miss Anna Ward.

<sup>3</sup> C. T. pp. 121, 125, 126, Mrs. Emma Offutt, George H. Calvert, B. F. Gwynne, John Nothey. See Appendix XXIX.: Note on Nothey.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix XXX.: Statement of John P. Brophy.

that she knew of the abduction plot, and that if she deplored its dangers, she did not deplore its design. Not many Northern women would have deplored a plot to seize Jefferson Davis in Richmond and take him to Washington in the hope of ending the war, though they might have been tearfully anxious to think of their own boys in such a hazardous undertaking. It is also probable that Mrs. Surratt carried, at Booth's request, a small package to Surrattsville the day of the murder and left it with Lloyd, saying that it would be called for. Even if she knew what was in the package — a field-glass — such knowledge would hardly argue her acquaintance with Booth's intent to murder. It is probable that when Booth learned she was going to Surrattsville (and Weichmann, on whose testimony all this rests, said the journey was determined on before Booth called) he asked her to tell Lloyd that the carbines left with him by John Surratt, Atzerodt, and Herold about five weeks ago, would be called for that night. Their immediate readiness on demand was not a great matter, but it would save a few minutes' delay; though, in the event of a few minutes meaning much, it is hardly likely that Booth would stop at all, as his safety would lie more in flight and concealment than in firearms. But even if he asked Mrs. Surratt to deliver his message

to Lloyd, it is not necessarily implied that he told her his reasons.

At least the likelihood of her innocence was as great as the likelihood of her cold-blooded guilt,<sup>1</sup> and feeling ran high over her case. To their great shame, certain Protestants believed she must be guilty because she was a Catholic; while many Catholics, on the other hand, acted in as mistaken zeal and argued that because she was a Catholic, she must be innocent. If some Protestant zealots charged the Church of Rome with her alleged crime, some adherents of the Church of Rome were as foolish in accepting the charge and feeling the Church involved in the controversy.

It was not really believed, however, that any extreme sentence would be pronounced upon Mrs. Surratt in view of her age, her sex, her previous reputation, and the character of the evidence against her. And between the time sentence was pronounced and the time it was carried into execution the interval was so brief that nothing could be done. She was sentenced on July 6th and hanged on July 7th.

After signing the decree fixing her penalty at death, five of the nine judges who condemned her petitioned clemency for her on account of her age and sex. This

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<sup>1</sup>“Any candid person who will review the evidence will be forced to the conclusion that she was an innocent woman.” Stewart, p. 169.

petition was taken by Judge-Advocate-General Holt to President Johnson, who read it in Judge Holt's presence, and also considered it at a Cabinet meeting. In the outcry that followed on Mrs. Surratt's hanging, Johnson tried to disclaim responsibility by swearing he had never seen the petition for clemency, and Judge Holt was accused of withholding it. This charge embittered all the rest of Judge Holt's life, and has given rise to a voluminous controversy, the simple truth of which seems to be that Judge Holt did indeed present the petition — whether he argued against it or not — and that Johnson's disclaimer and the silence of the Cabinet were a rank injustice to a man who, though narrow and bigoted, did not merit the charge of dishonour.<sup>1</sup>

The taking of testimony finished Wednesday, June 14th. The arguments for defence and prosecution, with some other court matters, occupied very nearly two weeks. It was ten o'clock Thursday morning, June 29th, when the Commission met, with closed doors, to deliberate upon the evidence. On Wednesday, July 5th, the sentences of the court were approved by the President, who named the Dry Tortugas as the place of imprisonment for Mudd, Arnold, O'Laughlin and Spangler, and Friday, July 7th, as the day for

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<sup>1</sup> See Holt-Johnson Controversy, Appendix XXXI.



Davey Herold



George A. Atzerodt

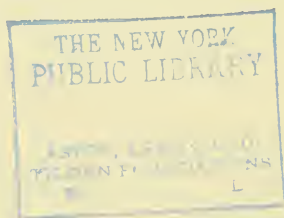


Lewis Payne



Mrs. Mary E. Surratt

THE FOUR CONSPIRATORS WHO WERE HANGED





the execution of Payne, Herold, Atzerodt, and Mrs. Surratt.<sup>1</sup>

At nine o'clock on Thursday morning, July 6th, General Hartranft, the special Provost-Marshal, accompanied by the nine judges of the court and the officers of the prison, went to the cell of each prisoner and read the verdict. Later, the four condemned to die next day between the hours of ten and two, were taken to a large room on the ground floor, where their friends and spiritual advisers were allowed to see them. There was no one to see the Florida boy except a Baptist clergyman, Dr. Gillette, who was a total stranger to this son of another Baptist clergyman alike unknown to him. Atzerodt was visited by his mother and by a poor, ignorant woman who was said to have been his mistress. Dr. Butler, pastor of a Lutheran church in Washington, and an army chaplain, was ordered to see Atzerodt and give him such spiritual comfort as he would take. He found the condemned carriage-painter reading the Bible at that passage in Numbers containing the warning: "Be sure your sin will find you out." Atzerodt entreated Dr. Butler to preach to young men on that text and to drive it home to them with the imploring message of a man about to die.<sup>2</sup> The saddest scenes were those of which

<sup>1</sup> O. R. Series II., vol. viii., p. 699; see also Appendix XXXII: Order for execution.

<sup>2</sup> Told the present writer by Dr. Butler.

Davy Herold and Mrs. Surratt were the centres. Davy's seven sisters clustered around him in grief so piteous that the guards turned away, unable to bear the sight of it. And the anguish of poor Anna Surratt moved every one to tears. Fathers Walter and Wiget attended her mother spiritually, and the frenzied girl went trembling away to make appeals for her mother's life. She went to Stanton's office but found it barricaded against her, in effect, by the War Secretary's strict order that she must not be admitted.<sup>1</sup> She went to General Hancock, who assured her sadly, gently, that he could do nothing. She went, early on Friday morning, to the White House where she pleaded in vain to see the President. The nearest she could get to him was in the person of General R. D. Mussey, his private secretary, at whose feet she threw herself begging for mercy. General Mussey said he had never lived through moments of such distress; but he, too, had received orders to keep out the supplicant at all costs.<sup>2</sup>

An attempt to stay the execution through a writ of

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<sup>1</sup> Told the present writer by Major A. E. H. Johnson, private secretary to Edwin M. Stanton, and the man to whose enormous industry we are principally indebted for the compilation of the Official Records.

<sup>2</sup> General Mussey was so anxious to help, that he ordered his horse and light buggy brought into the White House portico, where it stood, waiting the President's possible relenting, until after the tolling bells assured the general that there would be no eleventh hour reprieve for him to carry in mad haste to the doomed woman. Told the present writer by General Mussey's widow, Mrs. Ellen Spencer Mussey. See Appendix XXXIII: Note on "The Nest that Hatched the Egg."



Michael O'Laughlin



Edward Spangler



Sam Arnold



Dr. Samuel A. Mudd

#### THE FOUR CONSPIRATORS WHO WERE NOT HANGED

Arnold and O'Laughlin received life sentences and Spangler was sentenced for six years. Dr. Mudd was also sentenced for life but was pardoned by President Johnson on February 13, 1869.

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habeas corpus failed through suspension by the President — in whom this power is vested — an order to that effect proceeding from the Executive Office at ten o'clock on Friday morning.<sup>1</sup> It was confidently believed, almost up to the hour of execution, that some influence would avail to save Mrs. Surratt, and the tension at the penitentiary was horrible.

Since a little after eight o'clock soldiers, spectators, newspaper men, clergy, had been assembling at the prison to wait in the blistering heat — and wait — and wait. Soldiers stood, almost shoulder to shoulder, along the high wall surrounding the prison yard. Down below, in the grassy enclosure, were many more soldiers forming three sides of a large square, the fourth side of which was the penitentiary's front. Within the square the gallows stood, its platform, reached by fifteen steps, ten feet above the ground; the beam, from which four nooses dangled, ten feet above that again. Down at the gallows' foot were four new wooden boxes at the edges of four freshly dug graves.

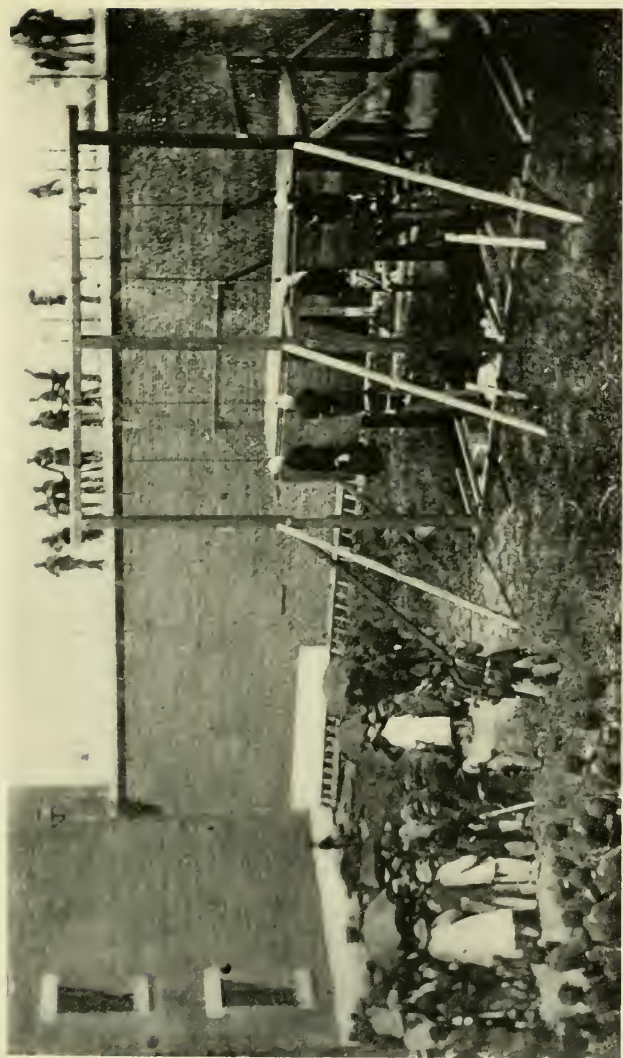
The wait was long, in the brazen sun, and nearly every one but the soldiers carried an umbrella. At last, when it was not far from two o'clock, the barred door of the penitentiary opened and a woman walked out, a

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix XXXIV.: Denial of habeas corpus for Mrs. Surratt.

middle-aged woman dressed in black, bonneted and heavily veiled. On either side of her walked a bare-headed priest, behind her walked four soldiers with muskets. In the strained silence the low tones of the priests muttering the service for the dying were audible to every ear. Then came a sound of clanking chains; a small, shambling German dragged his fetters toward the gallows. Two officers walked before him, a Lutheran clergyman walked beside him, a squad of armed soldiers brought up the rear. Next came a tottering boy, with an Episcopalian rector accompanying him. And last walked in the wasted shadow of a splendid young giant, with a shock of tawny hair and big blue eyes which made one spectator say he looked "rather the barbarian striding in his conqueror's triumph than the assassin going to the gallows."

The condemned were seated on the gallows while the warrants were read to them by General Hartranft. When he had finished, Dr. Gillette spoke on behalf of Payne, not in pleading nor extenuation, but merely to thank the prison officials for their kind treatment of him — which was not so ironical as it sounds, because the boy seems to have made himself liked, and his attendants, while they were powerless to mitigate the severity of his irons, probably did whatever they could to show him kindness.



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EXECUTION OF THE FOUR CONSPIRATORS IN THE YARD OF THE CAPITOL PRISON



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During Dr. Gillette's prayer the boy's big blue eyes filled with tears, and he followed in the closing sentences of it with deep emotion — the first he had shown since his arrest. Dr. Olds then said for Davy Herold that he tendered his forgiveness to all who had wronged him, and asked the forgiveness of all whom he had wronged. He also thanked the officers and guards for kindnesses rendered him, and said that he hoped he died in charity with all men and at peace with God. Dr. Butler spoke and prayed for Atzerodt, and there was no more to be said; Mrs. Surratt's confessors, after the custom of their Church, remaining silent.<sup>1</sup>

In a few moments the awful preparations were completed, the signal was given, the two traps fell, and four souls went home to a Tribunal which may safely temper justice with mercy.

Hardly more than an hour after the appearance of the black-robed woman at the prison door, four nameless graves were full and the grassy yard was quiet again under the fiercely beating rays of the summer sun.

Toward the end of that year there was laid beside them the body of Wirz, the keeper of Andersonville, who was hanged for atrocities of which he is now believed

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<sup>1</sup> George Alfred Townsend in *New York World*, July 8, 1865; also in his book; also in Baker, p. 508, *et seq.*; Oldroyd, p. 198, *et seq.*; Croggon in *Washington Star*, July 7, 1865.

innocent.<sup>1</sup> In 1867 the five bodies were taken up and removed to one of the storehouses in the Arsenal grounds. The body of Booth was laid beside them, and the old penitentiary where it had for two years had sepulture was torn down.

Just before Johnson left office, in February, '69, he yielded to the importunities of the Booth, Surratt, and Herold families, and allowed the bodies of the conspirators to be taken away for interment. Mrs. Surratt was buried in Mount Olivet, northeast of Washington, where her grave is marked with a modest headstone bearing only the name "Mrs. Surratt." Herold was buried in the Congressional Cemetery, and Atzerodt at Glenwood. Payne's body was taken to Holmead, a cemetery which was in after years discontinued; what then became of the Florida boy's remains is not known.

In February, when the President's permission was secured, Mr. Harvey, a Washington undertaker, drove out to the Arsenal grounds one afternoon and returned with the gun-box containing Booth's remains.

The establishment of Harvey and Marr was on F Street near Tenth; and after dark on that short winter afternoon the little company waiting, tensely, in the back

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<sup>1</sup> "A true story of Andersonville Prison: A Defence of Major Henry Wirz," by James Madison Page, Late 2d Lieutenant Company A, 6th Michigan Cavalry; published by the Neale Publishing Company, New York, 1908.

shop, heard the sound of hoofs and wheels on the cobble-paved alley; some one said "There they are!" and in a moment the waggon was backed into the stable. John Booth's body had come back, after nearly four years, to be coffined at a spot not a stone's throw from where his flight began.

The gun-box was set on trestles in the stable, and a lantern was called for; this was the light by which the cover was pried off the box, the gray army blanket lifted, and the remains disclosed. The head was severed from the trunk — as it naturally would be by the removal, at the inquest, of the two spinal spools — and it was passed from hand to hand and mused upon. Like poor Yorrick, that long, long ago actor, John Booth was also "a fellow of infinite jest." In the next room sat the great Hamlet, waiting.

The identification being satisfactory — aided by the dentist who had filled John Booth's teeth — the body, in a handsome new casket, was sent to Baltimore that night, and the following day was interred in the family lot at Greenmount, where it lies beneath thick ivy under the east face of the monument reared to the elder Junius Brutus Booth by his son Edwin in 1858.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> James Croggon in *Washington Star*, January 5, 1907; also from facts related to the present writer by Mr. H. Clay Ford, Mr. Charles Ford (John T. Ford's son), the Greenmount Cemetery authorities, and the Booth family.



## APPENDICES



## APPENDIX I

### FEELING AGAINST LINCOLN

IT MUST be remembered that in the summer and fall of 1864, Lincoln's position in the country seemed, even to his most sanguine friends, more precarious than it had ever been. During the first two years of the war, when the South was winning almost every fight and her armies seemed invincible, the feeling against Lincoln in the Confederate States was more contemptuous than violent. They thought they "had him licked." But after Lee's proud army came back from Gettysburg, and Grant's army marched into Vicksburg, and Northern prisons began to swell with tens of thousands of men the South needed to help her cause, feeling against Lincoln grew more sullen, vengeful. In the North, the McClellanites were bitter against him; there were many thousands of people who hated the war and resented with all their might being drafted into a fight for which they had no sympathy. There was so much disaffection for Lincoln, and his policy of saving the Union at any cost, that there was talk of a North-West Confederacy to aid the Southern

Confederacy. Lincoln's friends did not think he would get the renomination, but he did. They felt sure he could not get re-election, and so did he. On the eighth of September, Leonard Swett wrote from Washington to his wife: "We are in the midst of conspiracies equal to the French Revolution." Deep down under all the conspiring was the feeling that showed itself in the overwhelming returns of Election Day, when the North stood by Lincoln in a marvellous way. But buzzing about everybody's ears was the sound of conspiracy and discontent, and nearly every heart that knew bitterness blamed Lincoln as its cause.



## APPENDIX II

### BOOTH IN CANADA

EVEN if we place any dependence on the testimony of the men who later confessed themselves or were proved perjurers, the evidence regarding Booth's presence in Canada amounts only to the following: Richard Montgomery said W. C. Cleary told him that "Booth had been there, visiting Thompson, twice in the winter; he thought the last time was in December. He had also been there in the summer." (C. T. p. 25.) Conover said: "Booth I saw but once. That was in the latter part of October last." (C. T. p. 28.) Merritt said he "saw Booth in Canada two or three times," but did not undertake to say when. (C. T. p. 36.) John Deveny lived in Montreal from July, '63, to February, '65. He said he saw Booth "standing in the St. Lawrence Hotel, Montreal, talking with George N. Sanders. I believe that was in the month of October." (C. T. p. 39.) Hosea B. Carter "frequently observed George N. Sanders in intimate association with Booth" at a time he could not specify, except that it was between September 10, '64, and February 1, '65. (C. T.

p. 38.) William E. Wheeler was "at Montreal, Canada, in October or November last, when I saw John Wilkes Booth." (C. T. p. 39.) Robert Anson Campbell sold Booth a bill of exchange in Montreal on October 27th. (C. T. p. 46.)

## APPENDIX III

### CONFEDERATE COMPLICITY

THE controversy about Confederate complicity in the murder of President Lincoln has a history too vast to be entered into in less than a bulky volume. At the time of the assassination it is probable that a majority of intensely loyal Northerners believed the Southern leaders guilty. To-day only an inconsiderable remnant of hotheads believes anything of the sort. The attitude of the historian writing to-day is well expressed by Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, head of the department of history at Harvard. Answering a query of the present writer as to what contemporary historical scholarship thinks of the "evidence" that Davis and his associates plotted or knew of the murder of Lincoln, Professor Hart wrote: "There is not a scintilla of reliable evidence proving Confederate complicity in Lincoln's murder." James Ford Rhodes says: "The belief that there might be some truth in the charge against Davis was given up finally by most of the persons who at first thought it entitled to consideration." ("History of the United States," vol. v., p. 158.)

In these days, when we know how most of the "evidence" against the Confederate leaders presented at the Conspiracy Trial was obtained, the vindictive bitterness of some Northern men is interesting as an example of the lengths to which men can be misled by their frenzy.

A man named John Smith Dye — father of that Sergeant Joseph M. Dye whose delirious testimony gave the Military Commission of the Conspiracy Trial so much bootless bother — wrote a book called "A History of the Plots and Crimes of the Great Conspiracy to Overthrow Liberty in America," in which he attempts to prove that William Henry Harrison and Zachary Taylor died by arsenical poisoning administered by the friends of slavery (pp. 36, 64), and that on February 23d, 1857, Buchanan, on the eve of his inauguration, was poisoned at the National Hotel, Washington, by arsenic put in the sugar he used for his tea. This was in punishment, Dye thought, for Buchanan's failure to please the Jefferson Davis faction in his Cabinet appointments. (p. 91.)

Henry Ward Beecher, in the New York *Ledger* of May 20, 1865, put forward substantially the same ideas.

John A. Logan in "The Great Conspiracy"—the bitterest, most ungallant of all the books written by generals of both armies — says: "That this dark and wicked and bloody Rebellion, waged by the upholders and advocates

of Slavery, Free Trade, and Secession, had descended so low as to culminate in murder — deliberate, cold-blooded, cowardly murder — at a time when the Southern conspirators would apparently be least benefitted by it, was regarded at first as evidencing their mad fatuity.” (“The Great Conspiracy,” p. 647.)

Nicolay and Hay write of the Conspiracy Trial: “The charges against them [the conspirators] specified that they were ‘incited and encouraged’ to treason and murder by Jefferson Davis and the Confederate emissaries in Canada. This was not proved on the trial.” (“Life of Lincoln,” vol. x., p. 312.)

General T. M. Harris, a member of the Military Commission and author of “The Assassination of Lincoln,” chose to believe — and so late as 1892 to sustain — the mass of testimony against the Confederate leaders that “was not proved on trial.” General Harris says: “It is greatly to be regretted that such popular and usually reliable authors should have allowed themselves on this occasion to write thus loosely, and express opinions and conclusions so much at variance with the testimony.” (“The Assassination of Lincoln,” by T. M. Harris, p. 180.)

Now for this testimony: It rested chiefly on the evidence of one Sanford Conover, one Richard Montgomery, one

Dr. James B. Merritt, and one Henry Finegas. It was Conover, alias James Watson Wallace (tried in Washington for perjury in 1867, convicted, and sentenced to Albany penitentiary for ten years), who found Merritt, Montgomery, Finegas, and the rest and rehearsed them in their perjuries. (Minority Report of House Committee on Assassination, by Rogers, Report No. 104, 39th Congress, First Session, p. 39.) Conover swore at the trial that late in January and early in February, '65, and every day in February after an early date, he and Jacob Thompson talked, at St. Lawrence Hall in Montreal, about the assassination of Lincoln. January 1st to February 14th, Thompson, by the sworn testimony of many witnesses, was in Toronto. And as late as March 20th Conover was trying to make Thompson's acquaintance. Conover swore that about April 6th, he, Surratt, and General Carroll of Tennessee, discussed the assassination of Lincoln in Jacob Thompson's room. Two citizens of Montreal — General Carroll's physician and his landlord — swore that General Carroll was confined to his bed with a very painful disease, from April 1st to April 15th. Conover swore that other associates of his in Montreal were Captain Magruder and Dr. Pallen, both of whom swore they had never known such a person existed.

Montgomery had been a frequent prisoner in the Tombs,

New York, and had been convicted of robbery in the New York courts. He said he had talked with Thompson in Montreal in January, '65 (when Thompson was not in Montreal), and that Thompson had told him of the plot to kill Lincoln, Stanton, Grant, and others.

James B. Merritt swore that at a meeting of rebels in Montreal, about the middle of February, he heard a letter from Jefferson Davis read approving the assassination of Lincoln. He said that at this meeting were Captain Scott, Colonel Steele, and George Young, all of whom, throughout February, were at Windsor, opposite Detroit, 600 miles from Montreal; and Merritt himself was not once during February absent from the village of Ayr, Waterloo County, Canada, 600 miles from Montreal. He also said that in February, '65, he had conversation with Clement C. Clay in Toronto, at which Clay spoke of Davis's letter approving the assassination, and said he thought "the end would justify the means." Clement C. Clay left Canada in November, 1864, and did not return. ("A Belle of the Fifties," by Virginia Clay-Clopton, p. 237.) At Windsor, where Merritt lived for years, he was known as a disreputable citizen and common liar (eight prominent citizens swore thereto, and in its issue of June 24, 1865, *The Toronto Globe*, a paper conspicuously faithful to the North, gave the sworn statements of three justices of the

peace of Waterloo County, branding Merritt a lying quack). Yet Merritt got from the War Department for his testimony \$6,000. (Rogers's Report, p. 39.)

Henry Finegas, whose testimony implicated Sanders and Cleary, was a gambler and prizefighter. (Rogers's Report, p. 37.)



## APPENDIX IV

### THE LEENEA LETTERS

ON Wednesday, the sixteenth of November, John Booth went to New York where he remained for nearly a month.

On Monday, November 14th, General Butler left New York; and that was the day that a Mrs. Mary Hudspeth, riding on a Third Avenue car in New York City, overheard the conversation of two men in front of her. "They were talking most earnestly," she testified. "One of them said he would leave for Washington the day after to-morrow. The other man was going to Newburg, or Newbern, that night." The one who was going to Washington was educated, Mrs. Hudspeth said, and had beautiful hands; he had on false whiskers and wore a pistol in his belt. The other was called Johnson; he was older and of a rougher sort. They exchanged letters while in the car, and after they left Mrs. Hudspeth's daughter picked up an envelope with two enclosures. One of them began: "Dear Louis," and went on to say that the time had come, and "*Abe*

must die." The other was a note beginning: "St. Louis, Oct. 21, 1864. Dearest Husband." It was signed "Leenea"; the letter about the killing of the President was signed "Charles Selby." "Leenea" had nothing to say of assassination; all she wanted was her dearest Louis home with his wife and baby.

Mrs. Hudspeth took these letters to General Scott, who asked her to read them to him and then directed her to take them to General Dix, which she did. General Dix sent them, on the seventeenth of November, to Assistant Secretary of War, Charles A. Dana, saying that "but for the genuine letter from St. Louis in a female hand" he "should have thought the whole thing got up for the *Sunday Mercury*"—which it not improbably was. Mr. Dana showed the letters to President Lincoln, who was used to such communications and "seemed to attach very little importance to them."

Nevertheless, much was made of the Selby and Leenea letters at the trial of the conspirators, Mrs. Hudspeth even swearing that a photograph of Booth was a likeness of the younger man she had seen in a Third Avenue car seven months before. To make the identification complete, she spoke of the scar in his neck — not so remarkable a feat of memory when we remember that she testified on May 12th, when the papers were still full of Booth's

death, his official recognition by means of the scar in his neck, and other details.

Even if the incident of the Third Avenue car was on November 11th, the day General Butler was ordered to leave New York, instead of on November 14th, the day he actually left, we know that Booth was not there, because that was the only week end "about the middle of November" when he could have been in Charles County, Maryland, as attested by a dozen witnesses. But the Selby letter was gravely considered against him in spite of all the strong internal evidence of his having had nothing to do with it. It was too late, then, to visit more justice upon John Booth, but if the contention of the prosecution could be maintained it would show that what the conspirators were plotting, as early as November, '64, was not capture, but assassination. (C. T., pp. 40, 41.)

## APPENDIX V

### DR. MUDD'S STATEMENT

George W. Dutton, Captain Company C, 10th Veteran Reserve Corps, commanding the guard that took Mudd, Spangler, Arnold, and O'Laughlin to Fort Jefferson, Dry Tortugas, swore that on July 22d Dr. Mudd "confessed that he knew Booth when he came to his house with Herold on the morning after the assassination of the President; that he had known Booth for some time, but was afraid to tell of Booth's having been at his house on April 15th, fearing that his own and the lives of his family would be endangered thereby. He also confessed that he was with Booth at the National Hotel on the evening referred to by Weichmann in his testimony, that he came to Washington on that occasion to meet Booth by appointment, as the latter wished to be introduced to John H. Surratt; that when he and Booth were going to Mrs. Surratt's house to see her son they met, on Seventh Street, Surratt, who was introduced to Booth, and they had a conversation of a private nature." (C. T. p. 421.) To this, Dr. Mudd replied in a sworn statement dated at Fort Jefferson August 28th:

1. That I confessed to having known Booth while in my house; was afraid to give information of the fact, fearing to endanger my life, or made use of any language in that connection — I positively and emphatically declare to be notoriously false.

2. That I was satisfied and willingly acquiesced in the wisdom and decision of the Military Commission who tried me, is again notoriously erroneous and false. On the contrary I charged it (the Commission) with irregularity injustice, usurpation, and illegality. I confess to being animated at the time, but have no recollection of having apologized.

3. I did confess to a casual or accidental meeting with Booth in front of one of the hotels on Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C., on December 23rd, 1864, and not on January 15th, 1865, as testified to by Weichmann. Booth, on that occasion, desired me to give him an introduction to Surratt, from whom he said he wished to obtain a knowledge of the country around Washington, in order to be able to select a good locality for a country residence. He had the number, street, and name of John Surratt written on a card, saying to comply with his request would not detain me over five minutes. (At the time I was not aware that Surratt was a resident to Washington.) I declined at first, stating I was with a relative and friend from the country and was expecting some friends over from Baltimore, who intended going down with me to spend Christmas, and was by appointment expected to be at the Pennsylvania House by a certain hour — eight o'clock. We started down one street, and then up another, and had not gone far when we met Surratt and Weichmann.

Introductions took place, and we turned back in the direction of the hotel. Arriving there, Booth insisted on

our going to his room and taking something to drink with him, which I declined for reasons above mentioned; but finding that Weichmann and Surratt were disposed to accept, I yielded, remarking I could not remain many minutes. After arriving in the room, I took the first opportunity presented to apologize to Surratt for having introduced to him Booth — a man I knew so little concerning. This conversation took place in the passage in front of the room and was not over three minutes in duration. Whilst Surratt and myself were in the hall, Booth and Weichmann were sitting on the sofa in a corner of the room looking over some Congressional documents. Surratt and myself returned and resumed our former seats (after taking drinks ordered) around a centre table, which stood midway the room and distant seven or eight feet from Booth and Weichmann. Booth remarked that he had been down in the country a few days before, and said he had not yet recovered from the fatigue. Afterward he said he had been down in Charles County, and had made me an offer for the purchase of my land, which I confirmed by an affirmative answer; and he further remarked that on his way up he lost his way and rode several miles off the track. When he said this he left his seat and came over and took a seat immediately by Surratt; taking from his pocket an old letter, he began to draw lines, in order to ascertain from Surratt the location and description of the roads. I was a mere looker-on. The conversation that took place could be distinctly heard to any part of the room by any one paying attention. There was nothing secret, to my knowledge, that took place, with the exception of the conversation of Surratt and myself, which I have before mentioned. I had no secret conversation with Booth, nor with Booth and Surratt together,

as testified to by Weichmann. I never volunteered any statement of Booth having made me an offer for the purchase of my land, but made an affirmative response only to what Booth said in that connection.

Booth's visit in November, 1864, to Charles County, was for the purpose, as expressed by himself, to purchase land and horses; he was inquisitive concerning the political sentiments of the people, inquiring about the contraband trade that existed between the North and South and wished to be informed about the roads bordering on the Potomac, which I declined doing. He spoke of his being an actor and having two other brothers, who also were actors. He spoke of Junius Brutus as being a good Republican. He said they were largely engaged in the oil business, and gave me a lengthy description of the theory of oil, and the process of boring, etc. He said he had a younger brother in California. These and many minor matters spoken of caused me to suspect him to be a Government detective and to advise Surrat regarding him.

We were together in Booth's room about fifteen minutes after which, at my invitation, they walked up to the Pennsylvania House, where the conversation that ensued between Weichmann and myself, as testified to by him, is, in the main, correct — only that he, of the two, appeared the better Southern man, and undertook to give me facts from his office to substantiate his statements and opinions. This was but a short time after the defeat of Hood in Tennessee. The papers stated that over nine thousand prisoners had been taken, and that the whole of Hood's army was demoralized and falling back, and there was every prospect of his whole army being either captured or destroyed. To this Weichmann replied that only four thousand prisoners had been



ordered to be provided for by the Commissary-General [in whose office, it will be remembered, Weichmann was a clerk] and that he was far from believing the defeat of Hood so disastrous. I spoke with sincerity, and said it was a blow from which the South would never be able to recover; and that the whole South then laid at the mercy of Sherman. Weichmann seemed, whilst on the stand, to be disposed to give what he believed a truthful statement. I am in hopes the above will refresh his memory, and he will do me the justice, though late, to correct his erroneous testimony.

To recapitulate — I made use of no such statement as reported by the "Washington Correspondent of the New York *Times*," only in the sense and meaning as testified to by Dr. George D. Mudd, and as either misunderstood or misrepresented by Colonel Wells and others before the Commission.

I never saw Mrs. Surratt in my life to my knowledge previous to the assassination, and then only through her veil. I never saw Arnold, O'Laughlin, Atzerodt, Payne, alias Powell, or Spangler — or ever heard their names mentioned previous to the assassination of the President. I never saw or heard of Booth after December 23rd, 1864, until after the assassination, and then he was in disguise. I did not know Booth whilst in my house, nor did I know Herold, neither of whom made himself known to me. And I further declare they did not make known to me their true destination before I left the house. They inquired the way to many places, and desired particularly to go to the Reverend Wilmer's.

I gave a full description of the two parties (whom I represented as suspicious) to Lieutenant Lovett and three other officers on the Tuesday after the assassination.



I gave a description of one horse — the other I never took any notice of, and do not know to this day the color or appearance. Neither Booth's nor Herold's name was mentioned in connection with the assassination, nor was there any name mentioned in connection with the assassination, nor was there any photograph exhibited of any one implicated in the infamous deed. I was merely called upon to give a description of the men and horses and the places they inquired. The evidence of the four detectives — Lovett, Gavacan, Lloyd, and Williams — conflicts (unintentionally) on this point; they evidently prove and disprove the fact, as they have done in every instance affecting my interest, or upon points in which my welfare was at issue. Some swore that the photograph of Booth was exhibited on Tuesday, which was false. I do not advert to the false testimony; it is evident to the reader, and bears the impress of foul play and persecution somewhere — it may be owing to the thirst for the enormous reward offered by the Government, or a false idea for notoriety. Evans and Norton evidently swore falsely and perjured themselves. Daniel I. Thomas was bought by the detectives — likewise the negroes who swore against me. The court must certainly have seen that a great deal of the testimony was false and incompetent — upon this I charge them with injustice, etc.

Reverend Evans and Norton — I never saw nor heard their names in my life. I never knew, nor have I any knowledge whatsoever, of John Surratt ever visiting Richmond. I had not seen him previous to the twenty-third of December, 1864, for more than nine months. He was no visitor to my house.

The detectives, Lovett, Gavacan, Lloyd, and Williams, having failed to search my house or to make any in-

quiries whether the parties left anything behind on the Tuesday after the assassination, I myself did not think — consequently did not remind them. A day or two after their leaving the boot that was cut from the injured man's leg by myself was brought to our attention, and I resolved on sending it to the military authorities, but it escaped my memory, and I was not reminded of its presence until the Friday after the assassination, when Lieutenant Lovett and the above parties, with a squad of cavalry, came again and asked for the razor the party shaved with. I was then reminded immediately of the boot, and without hesitation I told them of it and the circumstances. I had never examined the inside of the boot leg, consequently knew nothing about a name which was there contained. As soon as I handed the boot to Lieutenant Lovett, they examined and discovered the name "J. Wilkes"; they then handed me his photograph, and asked whether it bore any resemblance to the party, to which I said I would not be able to recognize that as the man (injured), but remarked that there was a resemblance about the eyes and hair. Herold's likeness was also handed me, and I could not see any resemblance, but I had described the horse upon which he rode, which, one of the detectives said, answered exactly to the one taken from one of the stables in Washington.

From the above facts and circumstances I was enabled to form a judgment, which I expressed without hesitation, and I said that I was convinced that the injured man was Booth, the same man who visited my house in November, 1864, and purchased a horse from my neighbour, George Gardiner. I said this because I thought my judgment in the matter was necessary to secure pursuit promptly of the assassins.

In May, 1901, Samuel Cox, Jr., told Mr. Osborn H. Oldroyd that in 1877, when Dr. Mudd and he were the Democratic candidates for the legislature from Charles County, Dr. Mudd often talked privately to him about the assassination, and said that he knew Booth when he dressed the broken leg, but did not know of Booth's mad deed. Mr. Cox thought Dr. Mudd had been aware of the abduction plot, but he was sure the doctor had no part in the assassination, nor anything but abhorrence for it. ("The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln," by Osborn H. Oldroyd, pp. 268, 269.)

## APPENDIX VI

### ROCKVILLE LECTURE OF JOHN H. SURRATT

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Upon entering that door a few moments ago the impression on my mind was so strong as to vividly recall scenes of three years ago. I am not unacquainted with court-room audiences. I have stood before them before; true, not in the character of a lecturer, but as a prisoner at the bar, arraigned for the high crime of murder. In contrasting the two positions I must confess I felt more easy as the prisoner at the bar than I do as a lecturer. Then I felt confident of success; now I do not. Then I had gentlemen of known ability to do all my talking for me; now, unfortunately, I have to do it for myself and I feel illy capable of performing the task; still I hope you will all judge me kindly. I am not here to surprise you by an oratorical effort — not at all — but only to tell a simple tale. I feel that some explanation — perhaps, indeed, an apology — is due you for my appearance here this evening. In presenting this lecture before the public I do it in no spirit of self-justification. In the trial of sixty-one days I made my

defence to the world, and have no need or desire to rehearse it; nor do I appear for self-glorification. On the contrary, I dislike notoriety, and leave my solitude and obscurity unwillingly. Neither is it an itching for fame. I stand here through the force of that which has obliged many other men to do things quite as distasteful: pecuniary necessity, for the supply of which no more available channel presented itself. This is a reason easily appreciated. So you will take it kindly, I trust, as the ground we have to go over together will guarantee sufficient interest to repay your kind attention.

In this, my first lecture, I will speak of my introduction to J. Wilkes Booth; his plan, its failure, our final separation; my trip from Richmond and thence to Canada, then by orders to Elmira, what was done there; the first intimation I had of Mr. Lincoln's death; my return to Canada and my concealment there; and my final departure for Europe.

At the breaking out of the war I was a student at St. Charles College in Maryland, but did not remain long there after that important event. I left in July, 1861, and returning home, commenced to take an active part in the stirring events of that period. I was not more than eighteen years of age, and was mostly engaged in sending information regarding the movements of the

United States soldiers stationed in Washington and elsewhere, and carrying dispatches to Confederate boats on the Potomac. We had a regular established line from Washington to the Potomac, and being the only unmarried man on the route, I had most of the hard riding to do. I devised various ways to carry the dispatches — sometimes in the heel of my boots, sometimes between the planks of the buggy. I confess that never in my life did I come across a more stupid set of detectives than those generally employed by the United States Government. They seemed to have no idea whatever how to search me.

In 1864 my family left Maryland and moved to Washington, where I took a still more active part in the stirring events of that period. It was a fascinating life to me. It seemed as if I could not do too much or run too great a risk.

In the fall of 1864 I was introduced to John Wilkes Booth, who, I was given to understand, wished to know something about the main avenue leading from Washington to the Potomac. We met several times, but as he seemed to be very reticent with regard to his purposes, and very anxious to get all the information out of me he could, I refused to tell him anything at all. At last I said to him: "It is useless for you, Mr. Booth, to seek

any information from me at all; I know who you are and what are your intentions." He hesitated some time, but finally said he would make known his views to me provided I would promise secrecy. I replied: "I will do nothing of the kind; you know well I am a Southern man. If you cannot trust me, we will separate." He then said: "I will confide my plans to you; but before doing so I will make known to you the motives that actuate me. In the Northern prisons are many thousands of our men whom the United States Government refuses to exchange. You know as well as I the efforts that have been made to bring about the desired exchange. Aside from the great suffering they are compelled to undergo, we are sadly in want of them as soldiers. We cannot spare one man, whereas the United States Government is willing to let their own soldiers remain in our prisons because she has no need of them. I have a proposition to submit to you which I think, if we can carry out, would bring about the desired exchange."

There was a long and ominous silence which I at last was compelled to break by asking: "Well, sir, what is your proposition?" He sat quiet for an instant and then, before answering me, arose and looked under the bed, into the wardrobe, in the doorway and the passageway, and then said: "We will have to be careful; walls

have ears." He then drew his chair close to me and in a whisper said, "It is to kidnap President Lincoln, and carry him off to Richmond."

"Kidnap President Lincoln!" I said. I confess that I stood aghast at the proposition, and looked upon it as a foolhardy undertaking. To think of successfully seizing Mr. Lincoln in the capital of the United States, surrounded by thousands of his soldiers, and carrying him off to Richmond, looked to me like a foolish idea. I told him as much. He went on to tell with what facility he could be seized in and about Washington, as, for example, in his various rides to and from the Soldiers' Home, his summer residence. He entered into minute details of the proposed capture, and of the various parts to be performed by the actors in the performance. I was amazed — thunderstruck — and, in fact, I might also say, frightened at the unparalleled audacity of his scheme.

After two days' reflection I told him I was willing to try it. I believed it practical at that time, though now regard it as a foolhardy undertaking. I hope you will not blame me for going thus far. I honestly thought an exchange of prisoners could be brought about could we have once obtained possession of Mr. Lincoln's person. I now reverse the case: Where is there a young man in the North, with one spark of patriotism in his



heart, who would not have with enthusiastic ardour joined in any undertaking for the capture of Jefferson Davis, and brought him to Washington? There is not one who would not have done so! So I was led on by a desire to assist the South in gaining her independence. I had no hesitation in taking part in anything honourable that might tend toward the accomplishment of that object. Such a thing as the assassination of Mr. Lincoln I never heard spoken by any of the parties — never! Upon one occasion, I remember, we had called a meeting in Washington for the purpose of discussing matters in general, as we had understood that the Government had received information that there was a plot of some kind on hand. They had even commenced to build a stockade on the Navy Yard bridge, gates opening toward the south, as though they expected danger from within, and not from without. At this meeting I explained the construction of the gates, etc., and that the best thing we could do would be to throw up the whole project. Every one seemed to coincide with my opinion except Booth, who sat silent and abstracted. Arising at last, and bringing down his fist upon the table, he said: “Well, gentlemen, if the worst comes to the worst, I shall know what to do!”

Some hard words and even threats then passed between him and some of the party. Four of us then arose,

one saying: "If I understand you to intimate anything more than the capture of Mr. Lincoln, I, for one, will bid you good-bye." Every one expressed the same opinion. We all arose and commenced putting our hats on. Booth, perceiving probably that he had gone too far, asked pardon, saying that he "had drank too much champagne." After some difficulty everything was amicably arranged, and we separated at five o'clock in the morning.

Days, weeks, and months passed by without an opportunity presenting itself for us to attempt the capture. We seldom saw one another, owing to the many rumours afloat that a conspiracy of some kind was being concocted in Washington. We had all arrangements perfected from Washington for the purpose. Boats were in readiness to carry us across the river.

One day we received information that the President would visit the Seventh Street Hospital for the purpose of being present at an entertainment to be given for the benefit of the wounded soldiers. The report only reached us about three-quarters of an hour before the time appointed, but so perfect was our communication that we were instantly in our saddles on the way to the hospital. This was between one and two o'clock in the afternoon.

It was our intention to seize the carriage, which was

drawn by a splendid pair of horses, and to have one of our men mount the box and drive direct for southern Maryland via Benning's Bridge. We felt confident that all the cavalry in the city could never overtake us. We were all mounted on swift horses, besides having a thorough knowledge of the country, it being determined to abandon the carriage after passing the city limits. Upon the suddenness of the blow and the celerity of our movements we depended for success. By the time the alarm could have been given and horses saddled we would have been on our way through southern Maryland toward the Potomac River.

To our great disappointment, however, the President was not there, but one of the Government officials — Mr. Chase, if I mistake not. We did not disturb him, as we wanted a bigger chase than he could have afforded us. It was certainly a bitter disappointment, but yet I think a most fortunate one for us. It was our last attempt. We soon after this became convinced that we could not remain much longer undiscovered, and that we must abandon our enterprise. Accordingly a separation finally took place, and I never after saw any of the party except one, and that was when I was on my way from Richmond to Canada on business of quite a different nature — about which presently.

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Such is the story of our abduction plot — rash, perhaps foolish, but honourable, I maintain, in its means and ends; actuated by such motives as would, under similar circumstances, be a sufficient inducement to thousands of Southern young men to have embarked in a similar enterprise.

Shortly after our abandonment of the abduction scheme, some despatches came to me which I was compelled to see through to Richmond. They were foreign ones, and had no reference whatever to this affair. I accordingly left home for Richmond, and arrived there safely on the Friday evening before the evacuation of that city. On my arrival I went to the Spotswood Hotel, where I was told that Mr. Benjamin, the then Secretary of War of the Confederate States, wanted to see me. I accordingly sought his presence. He asked me if I would carry some despatches to Canada for him. I replied "Yes." That evening he gave me the despatches and \$200 in gold with which to pay my way to Canada. That was the only money I ever received from the Confederate Government or any of its agents. It may be well to remark here that this scheme of abduction was concocted without the knowledge or the assistance of the Confederate Government in any shape or form. Booth and I often consulted together as to whether it would not be well to acquaint the

authorities in Richmond with our plan, as we were sadly in want of money, our expenses being very heavy. In fact, the question arose among us as to whether, after getting Mr. Lincoln, if we succeeded in our plan, the Confederate authorities would not surrender us to the United States again, because of our doing this thing without their knowledge or consent. But we never acquainted them with the plan, and they never had anything in the wide world to do with it. In fact, we were jealous of our undertaking and wanted no outside help. I have not made this statement to defend the officers of the Confederate Government. They are perfectly able to defend themselves. What I have done myself I am not ashamed to let the world know. I left Richmond on Saturday morning before the evacuation of that place, and reached Washington the following Monday at 4 o'clock P. M., April 3, 1865. As soon as I reached the Maryland shore I understood that the detectives knew of my trip South and were on the lookout for me. I had been South several times before for the Secret Service, but had never been caught. At that time I was carrying the despatches Mr. Benjamin gave me in a book entitled "The Life of John Brown." During my trip, and while reading that book I learned to my utter amazement that John Brown was a martyr sitting at the right hand of God. I succeeded in reaching Washington

safely, and in passing up Seventh Street met one of our party, who inquired what had become of Booth. I told him where I had been; that I was then on my way to Canada, and that I had not seen or heard anything of Booth since our separation. In view of the fact that Richmond had fallen, and that all hopes of the abduction of the President had been given up, I advised him to go home and go to work. That was the last time I saw any of the party. I went to a hotel and stopped over that night, as a detective had been to my house inquiring of the servant my whereabouts. In the early train next morning, Tuesday, April 4, 1865, I left for New York, and that was the last time I ever saw Washington until brought there by the U. S. Government a captive in irons—all reports to the contrary notwithstanding.

The United States, as you will remember, tried to prove my presence in Washington on April 14th, the day on which Mr. Lincoln met his death. Upon arriving in New York, I called at Booth's house, and was told by the servant that he had left that morning suddenly, on the ground of going to Boston to fulfil an engagement at the theatre. In the evening of the same day I took the cars for Montreal, arriving there the next day. I put up at the St. Lawrence Hotel, registering myself as "John Harrison," such being my two first names. Shortly after-

ward I saw General Edward G. Lee, to whom the despatches were directed, and delivered them to him. Those despatches we tried to introduce as evidence on my trial, but his Honour Judge Fisher, ruled them out, despite the fact that the Government had tried to prove that they had relation to the conspiracy to kill Mr. Lincoln. They were only accounts of some money transactions — nothing more or less.

A week or so after my arrival there, General Lee came to my room, and told me he had a plan on foot to release the Confederate prisoners then in Elmira, N. Y. He said he had sent many parties there, but they always got frightened and only half executed their orders. He asked me if I would go there and take a sketch of the prison, find out the number of prisoners, also minor details in regard to the number of soldiers on guard, cannon, small arms, etc. I readily accepted these new labours, owing to the fact that I could not return to Washington for fear of the detectives. The news of the evacuation of Richmond did not seem to disturb the general much in his plan, as he doubtless thought then that the Confederacy wanted men more than ever, no one dreaming that it was virtually at an end. I was much amused at one expression made use of by an ex-reb with regard to the suddenness of its demise: "D—n the thing, it

did n't even flicker, but went right out!" In accordance with General Lee's order, I went to Elmira, arriving there on Wednesday, two days before Mr. Lincoln's death, and registered at the Brainard House, as usual, as "John Harrison." The following day I went to work, and made a complete sketch of the prison and surroundings. About ten o'clock on Friday night I retired, little thinking that on that night a blow would be struck which would forever blast my hopes, and make me a wanderer in a foreign land. I slept the night through, and came down the next morning little dreaming of the storm then brewing around my head. When I took my seat at the table about nine o'clock A. M., a gentleman to my left remarked: "Have you heard the news?" "No, I've not," I replied. "What is it?" "Why, President Lincoln and Secretary Seward have been assassinated."

I really put so little faith in what the man said that I made a remark that it was too early in the morning to get off such jokes as that. "It's so," he said, at the same time drawing out a paper and showing it to me. Sure enough, there I saw an account of what he told me, but as no names were mentioned it never occurred to me for an instant that it could have been Booth or any of the party, for the simple reason that I never had heard any-



thing regarding assassination spoken of during my intercourse with them.

I had good reason to believe that there was another conspiracy afloat in Washington. In fact we all knew it. One evening as I was partially lying down in the reading-room of the Metropolitan Hotel, two or three gentlemen came in and looked around as if to make sure that no one was around. They then commenced to talk about what had been done, the best means for the expedition, etc. It being about dusk, and no gas lit, and I partially concealed behind a writing desk, I was an unwilling listener to what occurred. I told Booth of this afterward, and he said he had heard something to the same effect. It only made us all the more eager to carry out our plans at an early day for fear some one should get ahead of us. We did n't know what they were after, exactly, but we were well satisfied that their object was very much the same as ours.

Arising from the table I thought over who the party could be, for at that time no names had been telegraphed. I was pretty sure it was none of the old party. I approached the telegraph office in the main hall of the hotel for the purpose of ascertaining if J. Wilkes Booth was in New York. I picked up a blank and wrote "John Wilkes Booth," giving the number of the house. I hesi-

tated a moment, and then tore the paper up, and then wrote one "J. W. B.," with directions, which I was led to do from the fact that during our whole connection we rarely wrote or telegraphed under our proper names, but always in such a manner that no one could understand but ourselves. One way of Booth's was to send letters to me under cover to my quondam friend, Louis J. Weichmann. Doubtless you all know who Louis J. Weichmann is. They were sent to him because he knew of the plot to abduct President Lincoln. I proclaim it here and before the world that Louis J. Weichmann was a party to the plan to abduct President Lincoln. He had been told all about it, and was constantly importuning me to let him become an active member. I refused, for the simple reason that I told him he could neither ride a horse nor shoot a pistol, which was a fact. These were two necessary accomplishments for us. My refusal nettled him some; so he went off, as it afterward appeared by his testimony, and told some Government clerk that he had a vague idea that there was a plan of some kind on hand to abduct President Lincoln. This he says himself: that he could have spotted every man of the party. Why did n't he do it? Booth sometimes was rather suspicious of him, and asked if I thought he could be trusted. I said, "Certainly he can. Weichmann is

a Southern man.” And I always believed it until I had good reason to believe otherwise, because he had furnished information for the Confederate Government, besides allowing me access to the Government’s records after office hours. I have very little to say of Louis J. Weichmann. But I do pronounce him a base-born perjurer, a murderer of the meanest hue! Give me a man who can strike his victim dead, but save me from a man who, through perjury, will cause the death of an innocent person. Double murderer! Hell possesses no worse fiend than a character of that kind. Away with such a character! I leave him in the pit of infamy which he has dug for himself, a prey to the lights of his guilty conscience.

I telegraphed Booth thus:

“J. W. B., in New York:

“If you are in New York telegraph me.

“JOHN HARRISON, Elmira, N. Y.”

The operator, after looking over it, said: “Is it J. W. B.?” to which I replied “Yes.” He evidently wanted the whole name, and had scarcely finished telegraphing when a door right near the office, and opening on the street, was pushed open, and I heard some one say: “Yes, there are three or four brothers of them, Junius Brutus, Edwin,

and J. Wilkes Booth." The whole truth flashed on me in an instant, and I said to myself: "My God! What have I done?" The despatch was still lying before me, and I reached over and took it up for the purpose of destroying it, but the operator stretched forth his hand and said: "We must file all telegrams." My first impulse was to tear it up, but I pitched it back and walked off. The town was in the greatest uproar, flags at half-mast, bells tolling, etc., etc. Still I did not think that I was in danger, and determined to go immediately to Baltimore to find out the particulars of the tragedy. But here I wish to say a few words concerning the register of the Brainard House. When my counsel, by my own direction, went to seek that register, it could not be found. Our inability to produce it on the trial naturally cast a suspicion over our alibi. For weeks, months, did we seek to find its whereabouts, but to no purpose. Every man who was connected with the hotel was hunted up and questioned. Every register of the hotel before and after the one which ought to contain my name was to be found, but the most important one of all was gone. Now, the question is, what became of that register? The United States Government, by one of its witnesses, Doctor McMillan, knew in November, 1865, that I was in Elmira at the time of the assassination. They knew

it, and they naturally traced me there to find out what I was doing. That some of the Government emissaries abstracted that register I firmly believe, or perhaps it is stored away in some of the other Government vaults, under charge of some judge high in position; but this is only a surmise of mine. But the circumstance involves a mystery of villainy which the All-Seeing God will yet bring to light. The dispatch I sent to Booth from Elmira it was also impossible to find. We had the operator at Washington during my trial, but he said the original was gone, though he had a copy of it. In telegraph offices they are compelled to keep all despatches filed. Of course we could not offer this copy in evidence, because the original alone would be accepted, and that had been made away with. So sure was the Government that they had destroyed all evidence of my sojourn in Elmira that, in getting me to Washington in time for Mr. Lincoln's death, they brought me by way of New York City; but so completely were they foiled in this that in their rebutting testimony they saw the absolute necessity of having me go by way of Elmira, and they changed their tactics accordingly. That was enough to damn my case in any man's mind. This is a strange fact, but nevertheless true, that the Government, having in its possession this hotel register as well as my despatch to Booth, and

knowing, moreover, by one of its witnesses, that I was in Elmira, yet tried to prove that I was in Washington on the night of Mr. Lincoln's death, "giving orders and commanding in general," as they were pleased to say. The gentlemen in Elmira, by whom I proved my alibi, were men of the highest standing and integrity whose testimony the United States Government could not and dare not attempt to impeach. I left Elmira with the intention of going to Baltimore. I really did not comprehend at that time the danger I was in. As there was no train going south that evening, I concluded to go to Canandaigua and from there to Baltimore by way of Elmira and New York. Upon arriving at Canandaigua on Saturday evening I learned to my utter disappointment that no train left until the Monday following, so I took a room at the Webster House, registering myself as "John Harrison." The next day I went to church, I remember, it being Easter Sunday. I can here safely say that the United States Government had not the remotest idea that I stopped anywhere after I left Elmira. They thought, when I left there, I went straight through to Canada. It was a very fortunate thing for me that I could not leave Canandaigua. Now, mark, ladies and gentlemen, if you please: My name was signed midway of the hotel register, with six other parties before and

after. There was no doubt as to the genuineness of signature, because the very experts brought by the United States to swear to my signature in other instances, swore also that that was my handwriting. After all this, the register was ruled out by Judge Fisher, because he was well aware if he admitted it my trial was at an end. I could not be in two places at once, though they tried to make me so. Listen to his reason for so ruling! "The prisoner might have stepped down from Canada to Canandaigua during his concealment and signed his name there for the purpose of protecting himself in the future." It was a likely idea that the proprietor of a hotel would leave a blank line in the register for my especial benefit! Need I say that the ruling was a most infamous one, and ought to damn the judge who so ruled as a villain in the minds of every honest and upright man. Had Judge Fisher been one of the lawyers for the prosecution, he could not have worked harder against me than he did. But, thanks to him, he did me more good than harm. His unprincipled and vindictive character was too apparent to every one in the courtroom. I could not help smiling at the time to think of the great shrewdness and foresight he accorded me by that decision. At times, really, during my trial, I could scarce recognize any vestige of my former self. Some-

times I would ask myself: "Am I the same individual? Am I really the same John H. Surratt?" When that register was produced in court, the Hon. Judge Pierrepont, the leading counsel for the United States, became exceedingly nervous, especially when Mr. Bradley refused to show it to him, and he tore up several pieces of paper in his trembling fingers.

He evidently saw what a pitiful case he had, and how he had been made the dupe of his precious, worthy friend, Edwin M. Stanton. At the time of my trial the proprietor of the Webster House in Canandaigua could not find the cash-register of the hotel, in which there should have been an entry in favour of "John Harrison" for so much cash. When he returned to Canandaigua, my trial being then ended, he wrote to Mr. Bradley, and sent it to him. It was then too late. My trial was over. If we had had that cash-book at the time of my trial it would have proved beyond a doubt that I was in Canandaigua, and not in Washington city.

On Monday, when I was leaving Canandaigua, I bought some New York papers. In looking over them my eye lit on the following paragraph, which I have never forgot, and don't think I ever will. It runs thus: "The Assassin of Secretary Seward is said to be John H. Surratt, a notorious secessionist of southern Maryland. His name, with



that of John Wilkes Booth, will forever lead the infamous roll of assassins." I could scarcely believe my senses. I gazed upon my name, the letters of which seemed sometimes to grow as large as mountains and then to dwindle away to nothing. So much for my former connection with him, I thought. After fully realizing the state of the case, I concluded to change my course, and go direct to Canada.

I left Canandaigua on Monday at 12 M., going to Albany, arriving there on Tuesday morning in time for breakfast. When I stepped on the platform at the depot at St. Albans, I noticed that one of the detectives scanned every one, head and foot, myself as well as the rest. Before leaving Montreal for Elmira I provided myself with an Oxford-cut jacket and round-top hat peculiar to Canada at that time. I knew my trip to Elmira would be a dangerous one, and I wished to pass myself off as a Canadian, and I succeeded in doing so, as was proved by my witnesses in Elmira. I believe that costume guarded me safely through St. Albans. I went in with others and moved around, with the detectives standing there most of the time looking at us. Of course I was obliged to talk as loud as anybody about the late tragedy. After having a hearty meal I lighted a cigar and walked up town. One of the detectives approached me, stared me directly in the face, and I looked him quietly back. In a few moments

I was speeding on my way to Montreal, where I arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon, going again to the St. Lawrence Hotel. Soon after I called on a friend, to whom I explained my former connection with Booth, and told him I was afraid the United States Government would suspect me of complicity in the assassination. He advised me to make myself scarce.

I immediately went to the hotel, got my things, and repaired to the room of a friend. When my friend's tea-time came I would not go to the table with him, but remained in the room. The ladies wanted to know why he did not bring his friend to tea with him. He replied that I did not want any. One of the ladies replied: "I expect you have got Booth in there." "Perhaps so," he answered, laughingly. That was rather close guessing. At nightfall I went to the house of one who afterward proved to be a most devoted friend. There I remained until the evening of the next day, when I was driven out in a carriage with two gentlemen, strangers to me. One day I walked out and saw Weichmann on the lookout for me. He had little idea that I was so near. One night about eleven o'clock, my friend, in whose house I was, came to me and said, in a smiling way: "The detectives have offered me twenty thousand dollars if I will tell them where you are." "Very well," said I, "give me one-half and let

them know." They suspected this gentleman of protecting me and they had really made him the offer. One day, about twelve o'clock, I was told that they were going to search the house, and that I must leave immediately, which I did. They searched it before morning. This gentleman was a poor man, with a large family, and yet money could not buy him. I remained with this gentleman until I left Montreal, within a week or so afterward. The detectives were now hunting me very closely, and would have doubtless succeeded in capturing me, had it not been for a blunder on the part of my friend Weichmann. He had, it appears, started the detectives on the wrong track by telling them that I had left the house of Mr. Porterfield in company with some others and was going north to Montreal. Soon that section was swarming with detectives. I was not with the party, but about the same time I, too, left Montreal in a hack, going some eight or more miles down the St. Lawrence River, crossing that stream in a small canoe. I was attired as a huntsman. At three o'clock Wednesday morning we arrived at our destination a small town lying south of Montreal. We entered the village quietly, hoping that no one would see us.

It has been asserted over and over again, for the purpose of damning me in the estimation of every honest man, that I deserted her who gave me birth in the darkest hour of

her need. Truly would I have merited the execration of every man had such been the case. But such was not the case. When I left Montreal there was no cause for uneasiness on my part, and upon my arrival in the country I wrote to my friends to keep me posted in regard to the approaching trial and to send me the papers regularly. I received letters from them frequently, in all of which they assured me there was no cause for anxiety; that it was only a matter of time, and it would all be well. After a while the papers did not come so regularly, but those that did come spoke very encouragingly. Afterward when they came sentences were mutilated with ink and pen. I protested against such action, and for some time I received no papers at all. I became very uneasy, and wrote for publication an article signed by myself, which I sent to Montreal to be forwarded for publication in the *New York World*. It is needless to say it never went. Things continued in this way for some time, until I could stand the suspense no longer. I determined to send a messenger to Washington for that purpose, and secured the services of an intelligent, educated gentleman. I started him off immediately, I paying all the expenses. I gave him a letter to a friend of mine in Washington, with instructions to say to him to put himself in communication with the counsel for defence, and to make a correct report to me as to how

the case stood — if there was any danger, and also to communicate with me if my presence was necessary, and inform me without delay, with an urgent request that he would see and inquire for himself how matters stood. He left me, and God alone knows the suspense and anxiety of my mind during the days of his absence. I imagined and thought all kinds of things, yet I was powerless to act. At last he returned, and so bright and cheerful was his countenance that I confess one-half of my fears were dispelled. He represented everything as progressing well, and brought me this message from the gentleman in Washington to whom I had sent him:

“Be under no apprehension as to any serious consequences. Remain perfectly quiet, as any action on your part would only tend to make matters worse. If you can be of any service to us we will let you know; but keep quiet.”

These were the instructions I received from my friend in Washington, in whom I felt the utmost reliance, and who, I thought, would never deceive. He also sent me copies of the *National Intelligencer*, containing evidence for the defence. I certainly felt greatly relieved, though not entirely satisfied. This news reached me some time in the latter part of June, just before the party of gentlemen of whom I have spoken had arrived. They, too, assured

me there was no cause for fear. What else could I do but accept these unwavering assurances? Even had I thought otherwise, I could not have taken action resulting in good.

Just on the eve of my departure to join a party of gentlemen on a hunting excursion, while I was waiting at the hotel for the train, the proprietor handed me a paper and said: "Read that about the conspirators."

Little did the man know who I was, or how closely that paragraph bore upon me or mine. That paper informed me that on a day which was then present, and at an hour which then had come and gone, the most hellish of deeds was to be enacted. It had been determined upon and carried out, even before I had intimation that there was any danger. It would be foolish for me to attempt to describe my feelings. After gazing at the paper for some time I dropped it on the floor, turning on my heel, and went directly to the house where I had been stopping before. When I entered the room I found my friend sitting there. As soon as he saw me he turned deadly pale, but never uttered a word. I said: "You doubtless thought you were acting a friend — the part of a friend — toward me, but you have deceived me. I forgive you, but I can never forget it."

"We all thought it for the best," he commenced to say, but I did not stay to hear more. I went to my room,

remained there until dark, and then signified my intention to leave the place immediately. I felt reckless as to what should become of me.

After visiting Quebec and other places, with a reward of \$25,000 hanging over my head, I did not think it safe to remain there, and so I concluded to seek an asylum in foreign lands. I had nothing now to bind me to this country save an only sister, and I knew she would never want for kind friends or a good home. For myself, it mattered little where I went, so I could roam once more a free man. I then went on a venture, and now, ladies and gentlemen, I go forth again on a venture. Gladly would I have remained hidden among the multitude, but the stern necessities arising from the blasting of my earthly prospects forced me to leave my solitude and to stand again before the public gaze as the historian of my own life. One mitigation to this distastefulness in this my first attempt, however, is the kindness with which I have been received and the patience with which I have been listened to, for which I return you, ladies and gentlemen, my sincere and heartfelt thanks.

## APPENDIX VII

### THE POSSIBILITY OF CAPTURE

MR. ROBERT W. McBRIDE, now of Indianapolis, was a Corporal of the "Union Light Guard," or "Seventh Independent Squadron of Ohio Cavalry," 108 men strong, which served as Lincoln's cavalry escort and guard from December, 1863, until his death. A company of Pennsylvania infantry shared the duty of guarding the White House; it was camped in the grounds just south of the White House, and two of its men were always on duty at the front door of the mansion. The cavalry were quartered in what is now known as the White Lot, but which was then known as the Treasury Park. "In those days," says Mr. McBride, in an address delivered before the Century Club of Indianapolis, and published in a pamphlet, October, 1908, "the White House grounds proper only extended south to a line running east and west from the south end of the Treasury Building to Seventeenth Street. They were bounded on the south by a stone wall three or four feet in height, the top of the wall being on a level with the White House grounds.



South of that, and extending to the old canal, which ran immediately north of the then unfinished Washington Monument, was the Treasury Park, a great common with a few small scattering trees and a half-mile race track. The barracks were south of the Treasury Department on the west side of Fifteenth Street, facing D and E Streets. Their horses were stabled on the grounds now occupied by Albaugh's Opera House, and were picketed and groomed on Fifteenth Street.

"To those familiar with the city of Washington during the Civil War," says Mr. McBride, "it was not surprising that Lincoln was assassinated. The surprising thing was that it was so long delayed. The city was filled with Southern sympathizers, and could easily be entered by men coming from beyond the rebel lines. The feeling against Mr. Lincoln as the chosen leader of those battling for the maintenance of the Union was of course intensely bitter. Even in the North he was constantly abused and vilified, characterized as a tyrant and monster, while articles appeared daily in many of the newspapers, the tendency of which was to incite to his murder." Even with the cavalry and infantry guard, "the inadequacy of the measures taken for Mr. Lincoln's protection will," says Mr. McBride, "be understood in a measure when I describe how I first saw him.

"It was after midnight of a January night in 1864. The approaches to the White House and the great portico on its front were lighted by flickering gas jets. The two great iron gates which guarded the driveways from Pennsylvania Avenue were open, but on each side of each gate was a mounted cavalryman. The detail from the Union Light Guard, dismounted and lounging against the stone supports of the portico, was the cavalry corporal of the guard, his horse being picketed in the rear of the house. (On that particular night I happened to be the corporal of the guard.)

"The two infantrymen were pacing their beats. From the end of the beat of the sentinel on the east side, a walk ran to the Treasury Department, and just north of this path stood the White House stables, inside a square-trimmed boxwood hedge probably two and one-half or three feet high. From the end of the beat of the sentinel on the west, a path paved with brick ran westward to the old War Department, a dingy-looking old brick building of the dry-goods-box style of architecture, occupying a part of the north end of the ground now covered by the magnificent State, War, and Navy Building. South of it, fronting on Seventeenth Street, and separated from the War Department a short distance, was another old-time brick structure, resembling it in architectural ugliness,

and occupied by the Navy Department. The space between the White House and War Department contained a number of great forest trees, making a beautiful little park in daylight; but at night, lighted only by the wavering beams of a solitary gas-jet, it was a place of shadows and gloom. The path to the War Department ran along the south end of this little park, under the shadow of the trees. Just south of the park was a brick wall, probably five or six feet in height, easily scaled, enclosing what was then called the White House Gardens. Lights shone in only a few of the windows of the White House.

“The front door opened, and a tall, rather slender, angular looking man came out alone. He wore a long, black, frock coat, and a silk hat of the peculiar narrow, high, straight style then in vogue. The hat had apparently either seen its best days or had been badly cared for, as it had lost its shine, and the nap was standing on end in many patches. The long coat and the high hat made him seem taller and more slender, even, than he really was.

“Closing the door, he clasped his hands behind his back, and with head bent forward, walked slowly toward the front of the portico. . . . The President came slowly forward until he reached the steps, and there he stopped. For several minutes he stood, seemingly in

deep thought, and apparently giving no heed to his surroundings. One of the gas-lights shone full upon him. He looked careworn and weary. . . . He came down the steps and without appearing to notice, gravely lifted his hat in recognition of the salute given, and turned toward the War Department. With similar gravity he acknowledged the salute of the infantryman as he passed him. While the infantryman at once resumed his beat, both he and the cavalryman anxiously watched the tall figure as it passed into the shadows of the great trees, and I know of one of them whose anxiety was only relieved when Mr. Lincoln was seen to enter the War Department building. In about half an hour he came back, still alone. This, while the first, was only one of many similar occurrences; for, as I then learned, it was his frequent and almost nightly practice thus to visit the War Department before going to bed, that he might have the latest news from the front. It was also his daily practice to make an early morning visit to the department. I never saw him attended at any of these times. He always went and came alone. I think, however, that late in the fall of 1864 a member of the police force in plain clothes attended him whenever he left the White House.

“From the description I have given of the surroundings it can be seen how easy it would have been for an assassin

to have killed him while he was on one of these solitary visits to the War Department, and how little actual protection was given him by the guards as they were posted."

Speaking of the plot to seize Mr. Lincoln in the park some dark night, lift him over the brick wall, and hurry him across the Treasury Park to the Van Ness house, Mr. McBride gives it as his conviction that "the plan was practicable, and I never understood why it was abandoned."

## APPENDIX VIII

JOHN Y. BEALL

JOHN Y. BEALL, who was detailed to assist in the capture of Johnson's Island in Sandusky Bay, and the release of the Confederate prisoners thereon, in the fall of 1864, and who, to assist the enterprise, seized the merchant steamer *Philo Parsons*, plying between Detroit and Sandusky — for which he was arrested, tried by a military commission, and hanged on Governor's Island, February 24, 1865 — was said to be a cousin of John Wilkes Booth. Beall was a fine young officer, much like Richmond P. Hobson in personality, and great efforts were made to save his life. "President Lincoln received fervent appeals, but beyond suggesting to General Dix a reprieve of six days, he did nothing." (Rhodes, vol. v., p. 332.) In an editorial in the *Christian Observer*, Louisville, Ky., for October 13, 1904, the statement is made that Lincoln promised Booth Beall should not be put to death, but Seward intervened. (See Southern Historical Society Papers, vol. xxxii., p. 99.)

## APPENDIX IX

### LINCOLN'S LAST JOURNEY

ON the sail up from City Point, April 9th — Palm Sunday and Lincoln's last Sunday on earth — the President read aloud, as he was fond of doing, from one of Shakespeare's tragedies. His selection was from Macbeth, and he read with special feeling the lines:

Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.  
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further.

As the *River Queen* drew near to Washington, Mrs. Lincoln, looking at the capital, said: "The hateful city; it is full of our enemies!" To which Lincoln replied, not so much as if he believed it but as if he wanted to believe it, "That is not so — now."

This was Lincoln's last journey, unless we count the journeying of his body during the many days of his funeral. For an account of his burial and the subsequent history of his body, the reader is referred to the following books

by Mr. J. C. Power, of Springfield: "Abraham Lincoln, His Life, Public Service, Death and Great Funeral Cortège, With a History and Description of the National Lincoln Monument," privately published in Springfield in 1872; and "An Account of the Attempt to Steal the Body of Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States, including a History of the Lincoln Guard of Honour," published by H. W. Rokker, Springfield, 1890.



## APPENDIX X

### LINCOLN'S LAST SPEECH

ON MONDAY, April 10th, a crowd gathered in front of the War Department and gave vent to its feelings of joy at the news from Appomattox. "Men yelled, shouted, screamed, cheered, laughed, and wept. No one thought of doing business. A band appeared from somewhere and commenced playing patriotic airs. In response to calls, Secretary Stanton, Vice-President Johnson, and others made speeches. That of Andrew Johnson was bitter and vindictive. One expression I can never forget. It was: 'And what shall be done with the leaders of the rebel host? I know what I would do if I were President. I would arrest them as traitors, I would try them as traitors, and, by the Eternal, I would hang them as traitors!' His manner and his language impressed me the more because of its contrast with the temperate manner and language of President Lincoln.

"Some one in the crowd shouted: 'To the White House!' The crowd surged in that direction, and began calling for the President. He appeared at an upper window,

just west of the portico. His appearance was the signal for cheering that continued for many minutes, with shouts of 'Speech! Speech!' He raised his hand, and the crowd stilled.

"He said: 'My friends, you want a speech, but I cannot make one at this time. Undue importance might be given to what I should say. I must take time to think. If you will come here to-morrow evening I will have something to say to you. There is one thing I will do, however. You have a band with you. There is one piece of music I have always liked. Heretofore it has not seemed the proper thing to use it in the North; but now, by virtue of my prerogative as President and Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, I declare it contraband of war and our lawful prize. I ask the band to play "Dixie."' Again the crowd went wild, and for probably the first time the tune of 'Dixie' was greeted with cheers from Union throats." ("Lincoln's Body-Guard," by Robert W. McBride, Indianapolis, 1908.)

Tom Pendel remembers attending to the illuminating of the White House front for the assemblage of Tuesday evening. It was accomplished by candle only, and the doorkeeper remembers putting out candles nailed to long strips of wood, and going the rounds to light them

shortly before the President was due on a balcony to make his promised speech. On these rounds, Pendel recalls, he was accompanied by the indefatigable little Tad. ("Thirty-six Years in the White House," by Tom Pendel; Neale, Washington, 1900, p. 33.)

On that evening, after dinner, Lincoln entered the Green Drawing-Room, where several White House dinner guests were assembled, and laid a roll of manuscript on the table. Those present looked surprised. "I know what you are thinking about," said the President, smiling. "You think it is mighty queer that an old stump speaker like myself should not be able to address a crowd like this outside without a written speech. But you must remember I am, in a certain way, talking to the country and have to be mighty careful. Now, the last time I made an off-hand speech, in answer to a serenade, I used the phrase, as applied to the rebels, 'turned tail and ran.' Some very nice Boston folks, I am grieved to hear, were very much outraged by that phrase, which they thought improper. So I resolved to make no more impromptu speeches." Later, says Mr. Noah Brooks, who relates this incident in his "Lincoln and the Downfall of Slavery," (Putnam's, New York, 1899, p. 452,) Mr. Lincoln admitted that it was Charles Sumner who was shocked.

## APPENDIX XI

### LINCOLN'S FOREBODINGS OF A TRAGIC DEATH

LINCOLN'S forebodings of a tragic death date back to the fall of '60, just after his first election to the Presidency. He himself described it as follows: "The news had been coming in thick and fast all day, and there had been a great 'hurrah boys!' so that I was well tired out and went home to rest, throwing myself upon a lounge in my chamber. Opposite to where I lay was a bureau with a swinging glass upon it; and in looking in that glass I saw myself reflected nearly at full length; but my face, I noticed, had two separate and distinct images, the tip of the nose of one being about three inches from the tip of the other. I was a little bothered, perhaps startled, and got up and looked in the glass; but the illusion vanished. On lying down again I saw it a second time, plainer, if possible, than before; and then I noticed that one of the faces was a little paler — say five shades — than the other. I got up, and the thing melted away; and I went off, and in the excitement of the hour forgot all about it — nearly, but not quite, for the thing would once in a while come up,

and give me a little pang, as though something uncomfortable had happened. When I went home, I told my wife about it; and a few days after tried the experiment again, when, sure enough, the thing came back again; but I never succeeded in bringing the ghost back after that, though I once tried very industriously to show it to my wife, who was worried about it somewhat. She thought it was 'a sign' that I was to be elected to a second term of office, and that the paleness of one of the faces was an omen that I should not see life through the last term. \_ ("Life of Abraham Lincoln from His Birth to His Inauguration as President," by Ward Hill Lamon, published by R. Osgood & Co., Boston, 1872, pp., 76, 477.)

In January, 1860, when Lincoln was facing the prospect of trying to save the Union after the Union was disrupted — after South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana had passed ordinances of secession — he was visited by his dear friend, Judge Gillespie, and the two men sat in the little frame cottage at Springfield, which Lincoln was soon to leave for the White House and its weight of woe, talking far into the night about the possibility of averting war. Lincoln feared it could not be done without such compromise as he was sworn not to make. "I see the duty devolving upon me," he told his friend, with an indescribable sadness

Judge Gillespie never forgot. "I have read upon my knees the story of Gethsemane, where the Son of God prayed in vain that the cup of bitterness might pass from him. I am in the Garden of Gethsemane now, and my cup of bitterness is full and overflowing."

"I told him," said Judge Gillespie, "that as Christ's prayer was not answered, and his crucifixion had redeemed the world, so the sacrifice demanded of him might be a great beneficence. Little did I then think how prophetic my words were to be, what a great sacrifice he was to make." ("Life of Lincoln," by Ida M. Tarbell, vol. ii, p. 200.)

Ward Hill Lamon, Lincoln's intimate friend, says ("Recollections of Abraham Lincoln," by Ward Hill Lamon, edited by Dorothy Lamon, A. C. McClurg and Company, Chicago, 1895, pp. 115-16) that a few days before Lincoln's assassination he told Lamon, Mrs. Lincoln, and one or two others present, of a dream he had, in which he heard "pitiful sobbing." In his dream, Lincoln said, he went from room to room of the White House and "no living person was in sight, but the same mournful sounds of distress met me as I passed along . . . until I arrived at the East Room, which I entered. There I met with a sickening surprise. Before me was a catafalque, on which rested a corpse wrapped

in funeral vestments. Around it were stationed soldiers who were acting as guards, and there was a throng of people, some gazing mournfully upon the corpse, whose face was covered, others weeping pitifully. 'Who is dead in the White House?' I demanded of one of the soldiers. 'The President,' was his answer; 'he was killed by an assassin!' Then came a loud burst of grief from the crowd, which woke me from my dream. I slept no more that night; and although it was only a dream, I have been strangely annoyed by it ever since." Lamon said that he wrote this down "immediately" after hearing Lincoln tell it. And if it sounds too incredible, we have to remember what a mystic Lincoln was, what a "dreamer of dreams." Assassination was constantly on his mind, not only because he himself really believed it would come to him, but because precaution against it was forever being dinned into his ears by his advisers. There was nothing remarkable in his dreaming the dream. It is only remarkable that it happened to come true.

## APPENDIX XII

### LINCOLN AND THE NEGRO MESSENGER

CHAPLAIN EDWARD D. NEILL was appointed, early in '64, to read and dispose of all letters addressed to Mr. Lincoln, and was, consequently, often in close relation to the President. He says that on Friday afternoon, April 14, '65, between three and four o'clock, Vice-President Johnson was at the White House, and evidently was urging upon Lincoln some vengeful action against the South, to which Lincoln made a gentle but firm refusal. Johnson retorted that Lincoln was too easy on the rebels, easier than he (Johnson) would be. This was overheard by Slade, a coloured messenger of the White House, who told Johnson he wished the day might come when he could be President and punish the rebels as they deserved. That night, when he heard of the assassination of Lincoln, Slade was overcome with grief, and could hardly be made to believe that his wish was in no way responsible for Johnson's speedy coming to the Presidency. ("Glimpses of the Nation's Struggle," papers read before the Minnesota Commandery of the Loyal Legion and published by the St. Paul Book and Stationery Company, 1887, pp. 29-55.)



## APPENDIX XIII

### DANA AND THOMPSON

DURING the afternoon of Friday, April 14th, there came to Charles A. Dana at the War Office a telegram from the provost-marshal of Portland, Me., saying: "I have positive information that Jacob Thompson will pass through Portland to-night, in order to take a steamer for England. What are your orders?" (Thompson, of Mississippi, had been Buchanan's Secretary of the Interior, and was the leader of the "Canada Cabinet" of the Confederacy.) Dana took the telegram to Stanton, who promptly said: "Arrest him." Then: "Go over and see the President." Dana found no one in the President's office, it being after hours, and was turning to go when Mr. Lincoln called to him from a little side room where he was washing his hands. Dana told the President about Thompson and asked what should be done. "When you have got an elephant by the hind leg," said Lincoln, "and he is trying to run away, it is best to let him run." Dana returned to the War Office and repeated to Stanton the President's judgment. "Oh,

stuff!" said Stanton. Dana was at the Peterson House that night, taking orders from his chief, until 3 A. M., when Stanton told him: "That's enough — you may go home." At 8 A. M. Colonel Pelouze, of the Adjutant-General's office, rapped on a lower window of Dana's house and said: "The President is dead, and Mr. Stanton directs you to arrest Jacob Thompson." ("Recollections of Charles A. Dana," pp. 274, 276.)

## APPENDIX XIV

### MR. GEORGE ASHMUN

MR. GEORGE ASHMUN, of Massachusetts, was an old fellow-congressman of Lincoln's on the Whig side of the House. On Tuesday, June 16, 1860, the day the Republican National Convention met in Chicago, Mr. Ashmun was elected chairman of the convention. On Saturday, the second day after Lincoln's nomination, Mr. Ashmun went down to Springfield to make to Mr. Lincoln the official announcement of his nomination. On April 14th, 1861 — Sunday evening — Mr. Ashmun called upon the Hon. Stephen A. Douglas and persuaded him to go to the White House and assure Lincoln that the Democratic party was one with the Republican party in its attitude toward Sumter's fall, the news of which had reached Washington late that day. Mr. Ashmun's last call on Lincoln was exactly four years later than the memorable visit which established peace between Lincoln and the "Little Giant." The "friend" to be admitted with Mr. Ashmun at 9 A. M. was Judge C. P. Daly, of New York. ("Life of Stephen A. Douglas," by Allen Johnson, pp. 475, 478. "Life of Lincoln," by J. G. Holland, p. 301.)

## APPENDIX XV

### “OUR AMERICAN COUSIN”

FORTY years ago he was a poorly informed playgoer who was not fairly conversant with the history of that play which Lincoln witnessed the night of his assassination. But to most readers of this generation it means little or nothing that Good Friday night, April 14, 1865, was nearly the one thousandth performance of Miss Laura Keane as Florence Trenchard in “Our American Cousin,” and the occasion of a benefit to her. And yet, quite apart from its connection with the tragedy of that night, Tom Taylor’s play has a history of surpassing interest and variety. In brief, it is somewhat as follows:

During the years 1850-51, when the World’s Fair in London was drawing throngs of visitors to the Crystal Palace, no nation was more strongly represented in the exhibits and among the sightseers than the United States. “Yankees” were the rage in London, and Yankee products took precedence of all others. As one American newspaper writer said, in describing the Yankee mania:

“Hobbs locks were placed on the doors of the Lord

Chamberlain's offices; Colt's revolvers were in the holsters of every British cavalry officer; Connecticut baby-jumpers were in the royal nursery; and Massachusetts patent back-acting, self-adjusting, rotary-motion, open-and-shut mouse-traps were the terror of even aristocratic rats. Lord John Russell 'guessed' and 'calculated' on the Papal Aggression Bill; Palmerston and Disraeli 'whittled,' one on, the other around, the Woolsack; and through the columns of the elegantly worded *Court Circular* we learned that at a particular fraction of an hour, on a particular day of the week, Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, aided by the Royal Consort, His Highness Prince Albert, together with the whole royal family, indulged in three half-pints of 'peanuts' and four and two-sixteenths of our genuine 'pumpkin-pies,' while Cardinal Wiseman and the Bishop of London were seen playing 'poker' over two stiff 'Bourbon whisky-slings.' "

In those days the versatile Tom Taylor was a young barrister who had recently emancipated himself from his professorship of English at University College, London, and was just beginning to establish for himself that position as dramatic critic and adapter, humourist and all-round journalist, that led him, more than twenty years later, to the editorship of *Punch*. Taylor saw the humor-

ous side of the Yankee craze, and wrote a play about it which he called "Our American Cousin." The leading character, Asa Trenchard, was virtually written to fit a Yankee comedian named Josiah Silsby, then playing in London, and when the play was sold by Taylor to Mr. Ben Webster, lessee of the Adelphi, for eighty pounds, it was with the distinct understanding that Silsby was to be featured in it.

But before an opportunity to put the play on presented itself, the Yankee mania rapidly declined, and Mr. Webster, instead of producing "Our American Cousin," made a present of the piece to Silsby, who, on re-reading it, decided that it was ineffective and laid it aside. Some years later, in California, he found himself in need of a play, and rehearsed the Taylor comedy; but it was again deemed unlikely to please, and he did not put it on.

It came to the ears of Taylor, in 1858, that Silsby was dead, and also that he had never used the "American Cousin" play; and having a copy of it among his manuscripts, Taylor put it in the hands of his friend, John Chandler Bancroft Davis, secretary of the United States Legation in London. Mr. Davis, on arriving in New York, took the play first to Lester Wallack. That admirable manager saw in it no possibilities for his company, but advised Mr. Davis to take it to Miss Laura

Keene, then managing a theatre of her own on the east side of Broadway, between Bleecker and Houston Streets, and to say to her that there was a part in the play that might be excellently adapted to Mr. Jefferson, of her company.

Mr. Joseph Jefferson, although of distinguished stage ancestry and a personal stage experience covering nearly his whole life, had not yet made any considerable mark for himself. He was not far from thirty years old, and most people thought he had ability — as for him, he felt sure of it — but, so far, his chance had not presented itself.

Miss Keene, when approached with the Taylor play, was not much interested. She was preparing a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and all her energies and resources were directed thereunto. It happened, however, that work on the Shakespeare play went forward tardily, and, owing to some disappointments by costumers and scene-painters, the date of the first performance had to be postponed two weeks. Miss Keene was sufficiently in need of something to fill the interim to buy — on the recommendation of her business manager and of Mr. Jefferson — the Taylor play outright for one thousand dollars.

Jefferson, in his "Autobiography," has vividly described

the scene when the stop-gap play that was to make fame and fortune for three of those present was read to Miss Keene's company.

"The reading," he says, "took place in the green-room, and many were the furtive glances cast at Mr. Couldock and me as the strength of Abel Murcott and Asa Trenchard were revealed. Poor Sothern sat in the corner, looking quite disconsolate, fearing there was nothing in the play that would suit him; and as the dismal lines of Dunderary were read, he glanced over at me with a forlorn expression, as much as to say, 'I am cast for that dreadful part' — little dreaming that the character of the imbecile lord would turn out to be the stepping-stone to his fortune. The success of the play proved the turning-point in the career of three persons — Laura Keene, Sothern, and myself."

Perhaps it is not quite comprehensible to the play-going world how the play-acting world is ever alert for that "chance" which every actor feels is all he needs to make him rich and famous. Each new play is full of potentialities — until it is read or the parts are apportioned; then it is seen to be quite fiendishly calculated to keep nearly or quite every one in the company from doing what nature designed him for and art calls him to do. Either the playwright went malevolently about this



repression business, or the stage-manager schemed it out and achieved his ends by giving everybody exactly the wrong part.

"Poor Sothern," as Jefferson called him, may well have been disconsolate over the forty-seven silly lines allotted him. It was only one more disappointment in a long list, but Sothern felt that the list was already too long, and that the profession he had chosen for himself against all the traditions of his family was ill-chosen and were better abandoned. He had been acting for nine years — all but two years of the time in America — and had met with small success indeed. About the time of that reading in Laura Keene's green-room, Sothern was writing home to one of his English friends about "a long, struggling tear" that forced its way down his "cheek, that fate had done naught but cuff for years," and telling of gray hairs which "have been forced through the hotbed of my weary skull."

It was to this ambitious, hard-working, but almost through-hoping young Englishman of two-and-thirty that the silly lines of Dundreary fell. At first he said he could do nothing with the part; "and certainly," as Jefferson testifies, "for the first two weeks it was a dull effort and produced but little effect." Then Sothern asked permission to rewrite Dundreary, and, this being

granted, he began to feel his way with his audiences by introducing little extravagances of speech and action. Some of these were the result of marvellously minute studies he had made from real types — he used to contend, when charged with the exaggerations of Dundreary, that there was nothing in the portrayal he had not taken direct from life — and some of them were happy accidents, like the famous skipping walk. Of this walk it is told that, at a rehearsal of the play, Sothern, to keep warm in the cold theatre, was hopping and skipping about the outer confines of the stage, to the no small amusement of his fellow actors, when Miss Keene called sharply to him and asked if that were part of his rehearsal. He replied promptly that it was, and in a spirit of bravado kept on. In the same spirit he introduced the skip into his entrance that night, and found that it was an instantaneous success, bringing a tremendous laugh for Dundreary where before there had been only tolerance. Cautiously, artistically, he proceeded to elaborate the part until, as Jefferson magnanimously says, "Before the first month was over he stood side by side with any other character in the play; and at the end of the run he was, in my opinion, considerably in advance of us all."

The piece, put on for a fortnight, ran for one hundred and forty consecutive nights — a phenomenal run for

that epoch — and thoroughly established, in New York at least, the fame of Jefferson and Sothern, and transformed them both from more or less discouraged young “members of stock” to men with ambition — and confidence — to “star.”

When the curtain descended the first night on Jefferson’s immediately successful presentation of Asa Trenchard, “visions of large type, foreign countries, and increased remuneration” floated before him, and he was already resolved to be a star.

Accordingly, when at the end of March “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” was put on — not because the demand for “Our American Cousin” had abated, but because Miss Keene had grown tired of her part and tireder of hearing her two comedians praised above herself — Jefferson, who had not got on well with Miss Keene and who was of no mind to abandon Asa Trenchard, told her that he would not rejoin her company next season. She reproached him with lack of gratitude; to which he replied that he thought the honours were about even, and that, “anyway,” he was going to “star”; at which Miss Keene sniffed her contempt and inquired in what play he would storm the country. He replied that, with her permission, he purposed to act “Our American Cousin.” Miss Keene indicated that he “had another purpose

coming to him," so to speak. And there the matter rested for a time, until she deputed her business manager to speak to Mr. Jefferson — she herself not being on speaking terms with that hoity-toity young man — and require him to resign the part of Bottom in favour of Mr. Blake, a comedian of her company who had had no part in the Taylor play. This Jefferson refused to do, saying that if Mr. Blake wanted to play in "A Midsummer Night" he could play Puck. As Mr. Blake weighed two hundred pounds or thereabouts, and was unwieldy to boot, this suggestion did not meet with favour in any quarter, and there was a bitter quarrel, which finally came to an end by Jefferson's offer to lend his far slenderer and sprightlier person to Puck if Miss Keene would let him star in Taylor's play, and give her, for the use of it, one half the profits. His starring venture was not a success, and in September he joined Boucicault's forces at the Winter Garden. But during the years 1861-65 he toured Australia and South America, playing Asa Trenchard with some little success.

The part was never again so prominent in his career as during that first run in New York; but Asa had done something for him which put his performance of that character, and even the confidence it gave him in his abilities, quite among the lesser results, for him, of Tom

Taylor's play: it led him to *Rip Van Winkle*! The success he achieved as Asa was of a sort he longed to duplicate, and in his attempts to analyze it he evolved the idea of a *Rip Van Winkle* play, three or four bad dramatizations of which had already been acted without any considerable success. So much for Jefferson's fortune as indebted to Taylor's play.

I have not been able to find out by just what arrangement with Miss Keene Sothern got the rights to *Dundreary*, but he played it in this country for months after she discontinued the piece, and in November, 1861, he opened with it at the Haymarket, London, where, after a month of discouraging business, it suddenly caught on, and played to crowded houses for four hundred consecutive nights.

The part continued to be Sothern's most famous characterization, and he acted in it with undiminishing success until he died. Nothing else he ever did created such a furore; indeed, few things that anybody ever did on the stage have been so great popular achievements or have belonged so solely to their creators. The fortunes *Dundreary* earned for Sothern were princely; the fame he made for Sothern was not eclipsed by that of any other comedian of his day; the fashions he set for all the world were comparable to nothing in recent stage history:

Dundreary coats, Dundreary whiskers, Dundreary vests and monocles, had almost as universal vogue as "Dundrearyisms" — some of which latter remain to us yet in the oft-quoted "Birds of a feather gather no moss," and similar perverted parables.

It was amid the laughter of this piece — which he knew by heart — that John Wilkes Booth planned to accomplish the murder of Lincoln. When, on the morning of April 14th, as he sat reading his letters in Mr. Ford's office, he heard that the President was going to attend the performance that night, he determined on a plan of action that came incredibly near allowing him to affect his escape and leave the deed, done in the sight of hundreds, shrouded in mystery.

I am indebted — after having interviewed every discoverable survivor of the audience at Ford's Theater that fateful Good Friday night, and being told that the Presidential party arrived at 8.30, at 9, at 9.30, and at all the times between — to Mr. George C. Maynard for a definite statement. Mr. Maynard, then of the War Telegraph Office, and now of the National Museum, was in the habit of keeping his theatre programmes. On the margin of the long play-bill of that night he made a note of the point in the play at which Mr. Lincoln came in, and wrote down the lines being spoken as the Presidential party

entered the box. Florence Trenchard was trying to tell a joke to Dundreary, who — of course — did not see it.

“Can’t you see it?” she said.

“No, I can’t see it,” he assured her.

Just then Mr. Lincoln entered the state box on the upper right-hand side of the house, and Miss Keene, catching sight of him, said: “Well, everybody can see *that!*” nodding toward the box. And the orchestra struck up “Hail to the Chief,” the audience cheered, and the play was at a standstill for a minute.

In the elder Sothern’s prompt-book (preserved by his son) this incident occurs late in the first act; whether it was the same in Miss Keene’s version I have been unable to learn, but it probably was, and that would fix the time of Mr. Lincoln’s entrance at about half-past eight or a quarter to nine.

The shot was fired during the second scene of the third act. It was during the scene when Asa is alone on the stage that Booth fired, jumped, and made his frantic rush across the front of the stage to the “prompt entrance” on the opposite side, and out through that to the stage door.

The play, interrupted at that point, was never again presented in Washington until December 12, 1907, when the younger Sothern revived it at the Belasco Theatre,

on the site of the old Seward house where Secretary Seward was nearly done to death by Booth's accomplice, Lewis Payne, on the same fatal night of Lincoln's murder. (Clara E. Laughlin, in *McClure's Magazine* for December, 1908.)



## APPENDIX XVI

### ATZERODT'S STATEMENT

AT THE conclusion of his argument in behalf of George A. Atzerodt, his counsel, W. E. Doster, read the following statement by Atzerodt:

I am one of a party who agreed to capture the President of the United States, but I am not one of a party to kill the President of the United States, or any member of the Cabinet, or General Grant, or Vice-President Johnson. The first plot to capture failed, the second — to kill — I broke away from the moment I heard of it.

This is the way it came about: On the evening of April 14th I met Booth and Payne at the Herndon House in this city, at eight o'clock. He (Booth) said he himself should murder Mr. Lincoln and General Grant, Payne should take Mr. Seward, and I should take Mr. Johnson. I told him I would not do it; that I had gone into the thing to capture, but I was not going to kill. He told me I was a fool; that I would be hung anyhow; and that it was death for every man that backed out; and so we parted. I wandered about the streets until about two o'clock in the morning, and then went to the Kimmell House, and from there pawned my pistol at Georgetown, and went to my cousin's house in Montgomery County, where I was arrested the 19th following. After I was arrested, I told Provost-Marshal Wells and

Provost-Marshall McPhail the whole story; also told it to Captain Monroe, and Colonel Wells told me if I pointed out the way Booth had gone I would be reprieved, and so I told him I thought he had gone down Charles County in order to cross the Potomac. The arms which were found in my room at the Kirkwood House, and a black coat, do not belong to me; neither were they left to be used by me. On the afternoon of April 14th, Herold called to see me and left the coat there. It is his coat, and all in it belongs to him, as you can see by the handkerchiefs, marked with his initial and with the name of his sister, Mrs. Naylor. Now I will state how I passed the whole of the evening of April 14th: In the afternoon, at about two o'clock, I went to Keleher's stable, on Eighth Street, near D, and hired a dark-bay mare and rode into the country for pleasure, and on my return put her up at Naylor's stable. The dark-bay horse which I had kept at Naylor's before, on or about April 3rd, belonged to Booth; also the saddle and bridle. I do not know what became of him. At about six in the evening I went to Naylor's again, and took out the mare, rode out for an hour, and returned her to Naylor's. It was then nearly eight, and I told him to keep the mare ready at ten o'clock, in order to return her to the man I hired her from. From there I went to the Herndon House. Booth sent a messenger to the "oyster bay" and I went. Booth wanted me to murder Mr. Johnson. I refused. I then went to the "oyster bay" on the Avenue, above Twelfth Street, and whiled away the time until nearly ten. At ten I got the mare, and having taken a drink with the hostler, galloped about town, and went to the Kimmell House. From there I rode down to the depot, and returned my horse, riding up Pennsylvania Avenue to Keleher's.

From Keleher's I went down to the Navy Yard to get a room with Wash. Briscoe. He had none, and by the time I got back to the Kimmell House it was nearly two. The man Thomas was a stranger I met on the street. Next morning, as stated, I went to my cousin's, in Montgomery County. (Conspiracy Trial, p. 307.)

## APPENDIX XVII

### THE TRIAL OF JOHN SURRETT

IMMEDIATELY after arriving in Montreal, April 18th, Surratt went to the house of a Southern gentleman connected with the Ontario Bank; his name was Porterfield. But Weichmann and United States detectives were in Montreal searching for Surratt, and it was deemed best for him to go out forty miles into the country, to the village of St. Liboire, where a priest named Father Boucher gave the fugitive asylum for three months. During August and the early days of September, Surratt was sheltered and hid by another priest, and the second week in September the two priests took him by steamer to Qubec and saw him aboard the *Peruvian* bound for Liverpool. Surratt remained in Liverpool until November, when he went to Rome and enlisted in the Papal Zouaves. He was recognized by a French-Canadian friend of Weichmann's, informed against, and after many delays, while diplomatic correspondence passed back and forth between Rome and Washington, his arrest was ordered by the Papal Government. He was arrested November

7, 1866, but escaped, the next morning, from the guard of six soldiers who were taking him to Rome. This he did by jumping over a balustrade on to a ledge of rocks projecting over a deep abyss. He made his perilous way into the valley below Velletri, and reached Naples, whence he sailed, November 19th, for Alexandria, Egypt. There, on the 27th, he was arrested by the United States consul-general. On December 21st he was sent home in irons on an armed United States vessel. His trial was held in the criminal court for the District of Columbia, Judge George P. Fisher presiding. The District Attorney was E. C. Carrington, who had one regular and two special assistants. Counsel for Surratt were Joseph H. Bradley and his son and R. T. Merrick. The trial opened June 10, 1867, and the taking of testimony from more than two hundred witnesses lasted until July 26th. On July 27th the District Attorney began his argument; he spoke for three whole days. Mr. Merrick, speaking for the defence, spoke for two days, and the senior Bradley followed him, speaking all day Friday. Pierrepont, chief of counsel assisting the prosecution, spoke all day Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday. On the seventh of August the judge charged the jury, and the jurors retired to their room at 11.32. Saturday, August 10th, at 1 p. m., they reappeared in court and begged to be dismissed, saying

that they could not agree. Thus ended the trial of sixty-two days. Surratt was remanded to the Old Capitol Prison whence, some months later, he was released on twenty-five thousand dollars bail. Later, he was again arraigned for trial, but not on the charge of murder. The second trial never came off, and the prisoner was released. He has for many years been a respected and exemplary citizen of Baltimore, where he has done all in his power to bury the past, never referring to it even to his children. Every now and then an alleged newspaper interview with him appears; they are all fabrications — he has never been interviewed. For his boyish participation in a conspiracy of war, John Surratt has paid a penalty not much less hideous than some of the worst Russian horrors we read about.

## APPENDIX XVIII

### MAJOR RATHBONE'S STATEMENT

BEFORE Judge A. B. Olin, Justice Supreme Court, District of Columbia, on the 17th of April, Major Henry R. Rathbone subscribed and swore to the following statement:

That on April 14th, 1865, at about twenty minutes past eight o'clock in the evening, he, with Miss Clara H. Harris, left his residence, at the corner of Fifteenth and H Streets, and joined the President and Mrs. Lincoln, and went with them in their carriage to Ford's Theatre, in Tenth Street. The box assigned to the President is in the second tier, on the right-hand side of the audience, and was occupied by the President and Mrs. Lincoln, Miss Harris, and the deponent — and by no other person. The box is entered by passing from the front of the building, in the rear of the dress circle, to a small entry or passage-way, about eight feet in length and four feet in width.

This passage-way is entered by a door, which opens on the inner side. The door is so placed as to make an acute angle between it and the wall behind it on the inner side. At the inner end of this passage-way is another door, standing squarely across, and opening into the box. On the left-hand side of the passage-way, and very near the inner end, is a third door, which also

opens into the box. This latter door was closed. The party entered the box through the door at the end of the passage-way. The box is so constructed that it may be divided into two by a movable partition, one of the doors described opening into each. The front of the box is about ten or twelve feet in length, and in the centre of the railing is a small pillar overhung with a curtain. The depth of the box from front to rear is about nine feet. The elevation of the box above the stage, including the railing, is about ten or twelve feet.

When the party entered the box, a cushioned arm-chair was standing at the end of the box farthest from the stage and nearest the audience. This was also the nearest point to the door by which the box is entered. The President seated himself in this chair — and, except that he once left the chair for the purpose of putting on his overcoat, remained so seated until he was shot. Mrs. Lincoln was seated in a chair between the President and the pillar in the centre above described. At the opposite end of the box — that nearest the end of the stage — were two chairs. In one of these, standing in the corner, Miss Harris was seated. At her left hand, and along the wall running from that end of the box to the rear, stood a small sofa. At the end of this sofa, next to Miss Harris, this deponent was seated. The distance between this deponent and the President, as they were sitting, was about seven or eight feet; and the distance between this deponent and the door was about the same.

The distance between the President, as he sat, and the door, was about four or five feet. The door, according to the recollection of this deponent, was not closed during the evening. When the second scene of the third act was being performed, and while this deponent was intently observing the proceedings upon the stage,



with his back toward the door, he heard the discharge of a pistol behind him, and looking around, saw, through the smoke, a man between the door and the President. At the same time deponent heard him shout some word, which deponent thinks was "Freedom!" This deponent instantly sprang toward him and seized him; he wrested himself from the grasp, and made a violent thrust at the breast of deponent with a large knife. Deponent parried the blow by striking it up, and received a wound several inches deep in his left arm, between the elbow and the shoulder. The orifice of the wound is about an inch and a half in length, and extends upward toward the shoulder several inches. The man rushed to the front of the box, and deponent endeavoured to seize him again, but only caught his clothes as he was leaping over the railing of the box. The clothes, as deponent believes, were torn in this attempt to seize him.

As he went over upon the stage deponent cried out, with a loud voice: "Stop that man!" Deponent then turned to the President; his position was not changed; his head was slightly bent forward, and his eyes were closed. Deponent saw that he was unconscious, and supposing him mortally wounded, rushed to the door for the purpose of calling medical aid. On reaching the outer door of the passage-way, as above described, deponent found it barred by a heavy piece of plank, one end of which was secured in the wall, and the other resting against the door. It had been so securely fastened that it required considerable force to remove it. This wedge, or bar, was about four feet from the floor. Persons upon the outside were beating against the door for the purpose of entering. Deponent removed the bar, and the door was opened.

Several persons, who represented themselves to be

surgeons, were allowed to enter. Deponent saw there Colonel Crawford, and requested him to prevent other persons from entering the box. Deponent then returned to the box, and found the surgeons examining the President's person. They had not yet discovered the wound. As soon as it was discovered it was determined to remove him from the theatre. He was carried out, and this deponent then proceeded to assist Mrs. Lincoln, who was intensely excited, to leave the theatre. On reaching the head of the stairs, deponent requested Major Potter to aid him in assisting Mrs. Lincoln across the street, to the house to which the President was being conveyed. The wound which the deponent had received had been bleeding very profusely, and on reaching the house, feeling very faint from the loss of blood, he seated himself in the hall, and soon after fainted away, and was laid upon the floor. Upon the return of consciousness deponent was taken in a carriage to his residence.

In the review of the transaction it is the confident belief of this deponent that the time which elapsed between the discharge of the pistol and the time when the assassin leaped from the box did not exceed thirty seconds. Neither Mrs. Lincoln nor Miss Harris had left their seats.

## APPENDIX XIX

### HARRY HAWK'S ACCOUNT

MR. HARRY HAWK, who was playing the part of Asa Trenchard, made famous by Joseph Jefferson, was a dear friend of Edwin Booth's, and out of respect to the terribly sensitive feelings of the great tragedian refused all urgings to talk of the crime while Edwin was alive. After Edwin Booth's death, however, Mr. Hawk, on a visit to the house where Lincoln died, talked to Mr. Oldroyd, the custodian, and allowed Mr. Oldroyd to print the following statement in his book:

Mrs. Muzzey, in the rôle of Mrs. Mountchessington, having just discovered that Asa Trenchard was not the man of wealth she supposed, had turned angrily to her daughter Georgina, saying: 'Go to your room; you may go to your room at once!' Then she turned haughtily and made her exit on the left, leaving me alone and looking after her. My lines were: 'Society, eh? Well, I guess I know enough to turn you inside out, old woman, you darned old sockdolaging man-trap!' I was looking up at the President's box as I repeated the lines, and the words had barely left my lips, and the shouts of laughter were ringing, when the shot sounded through the house." (Oldroyd, p. 28.)

## APPENDIX XX

### AFFIDAVIT OF MISS HARRIS

CLARA H. HARRIS, being duly sworn, says that she has read the foregoing affidavit of Major Rathbone, and knows the contents thereof, that she was present at Ford's Theatre with the President, and Mrs. Lincoln, and Major Rathbone on the evening of the fourteenth of April instant; that at the time she heard the discharge of the pistol she was attentively engaged in observing what was transpiring upon the stage, and looking round, she saw Major Rathbone spring from his seat and advance to the opposite side of the box; that she saw him engaged, as if in a struggle, with another man, but the smoke with which he was enveloped prevented this deponent from seeing distinctly the other man; that the first time she saw him distinctly was when he leaped from the box upon the stage; that she then heard Major Rathbone cry out: "Stop that man!" and this deponent then immediately repeated the cry: "Stop that man! Won't somebody stop that man?" A moment after, some one from the stage asked: "What is it?" or "What is the matter?" and deponent replied: "The

President is shot." Very soon after, two persons, one wearing the uniform of a naval surgeon, and the other that of a soldier of the Veteran Reserve Corps, came upon the stage, and the deponent assisted them in climbing up to the box.

And this deponent further says, that the facts stated in the foregoing affidavit, so far as the same came to the knowledge or notice of this deponent, are accurately stated therein.

## APPENDIX XXI

### BOOTH IN BOSTON

EDWIN BOOTH, at the Boston Theatre, was playing that night, not "Hamlet," as usually reported, but a double bill: "The Iron Chest" and "Don Cæsar de Bazan." He was playing Colman's tragedy, "The Iron Chest," last, and at about the moment of John's crime Edwin, as Sir Edward Mortimer, the homicide, was standing with uplifted dagger threatening the life of a youth who seemed on the point of opening the iron chest wherein the secret of Sir Edward's guilt was locked. This was told the present writer by Miss Ida Vernon, Booth's friend and one-time leading woman, to whom he commented on the coincidence.

Junius Brutus Booth was playing in Cincinnati, and with difficulty escaped the vengeance of a mob anxious to wreak its fury on any one belonging to the man reported to have murdered the President.

At seven o'clock Saturday morning, April 15th, Henry C. Jarrett, manager of the Boston Theatre, where Edwin Booth was playing, wrote to him as follows:

EDWIN BOOTH, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR: A fearful calamity is upon us. The President of the United States has fallen by the hand of an assassin, and I am shocked to say suspicion points to one nearly related to you as the perpetrator of this horrid deed. God grant it may not prove so! With this knowledge, and out of respect to the anguish which will fill the public mind as soon as the appalling fact shall be fully revealed, I have concluded to close the Boston Theatre until further notice. Please signify to me your co-operation in this matter.

In great sorrow, and in haste, I remain, yours very truly,  
HENRY C. JARRETT.

To this Edwin Booth immediately replied:

HENRY C. JARRETT, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR: With deepest sorrow and great agitation I thank you for relieving me from my engagement with yourself and the public. The news of the morning has made me wretched indeed, not only because I have received the unhappy tidings of the suspicions of a brother's crime, but because a good man, and a most justly honoured and patriotic ruler, has fallen, in an hour of national joy, by the hand of an assassin. The memory of the thousands who have fallen in the field, in our country's defence, during this struggle, cannot be forgotten by me, even in this, the most distressing day of my life. And I most sincerely pray that the victories we have already won may stay the brand of war and the tide of loyal blood. While mourning, in common with all other loyal hearts, the death of the President, I am oppressed by a private woe not to be expressed in words. But whatever calamity may befall me and mine, my country, one and indivisible, has my warmest devotion.

EDWIN BOOTH.

## APPENDIX XXII

### LETTER OF WILLIAM T. CLARK

In the room where Lincoln died there now hangs the following letter written by young William T. Clark, a soldier belonging to Company D, 13th Massachusetts Infantry, and detailed to duty in the Quartermaster's Department; he was the recent occupant of the little room where the President died:

WASHINGTON, D. C., Wednesday, April 19, 1865.

DEAR SISTER IDA: To-day the funeral of Mr. Lincoln takes place. The streets are being crowded at this early hour (9 A. M.), and the procession will probably not move for three hours.

The past few days have been of intense excitement; arrests are numerously made — if any party is heard to utter secesh sentiments. The time has come when persons cannot say what they please, for the people are awfully indignant. Hundreds daily call at the house to gain admission to my room. I was engaged nearly all Sunday with one of Frank Leslie's special artists, aiding him in making a complete drawing of the last moments of Mr. Lincoln, as I know the position of every one present. He succeeded in executing a fine sketch, which will appear in their paper. He wished to mention the names of all pictures in the room, particularly the photograph of yourself, Clara, and Nannie; but I told him he must not



do that, as they were members of my family, and I did not wish them to be made so public. He also urged me to give him my picture, or at least to allow him to take my sketch, but I could not see that either. Everybody has a great desire to obtain some memento from my room, so that whoever comes in has to be closely watched for fear they will steal something. I have a lock of Mr. Lincoln's hair, which I have had neatly framed; also a piece of linen with a portion of his brain. The pillow and case upon which he lay when he died, and nearly all his wearing apparel, I intend to send to Robert Lincoln as soon as the funeral is over, as I consider him most justly entitled to them. The same mattress is on my bed, and the same coverlid covers me nightly that covered him while dying. Enclosed you will find a piece of lace Mrs. Lincoln wore on her head during the evening, and was dropped by her while entering my room to see her dying husband; it is worth keeping for its historical value. The cushions worked by Clara, and the cushion by you, you little dreamed would be so historically connected with such an event. Love to father, mother, Clara. Don't forget you have a brother, and send me a longer note soon.

I will write again soon.

Your affec. brother,

WILLIE.

Willie's excellent but amusingly "important" intentions about the bestowal of the clothing of Mr. Lincoln and the pillow-slip on which his dying head lay were not destined to fulfilment. The pillow-slips, stained with Lincoln's blood, were at last accounts still in the Peterson family, in the keeping of Mr. Peterson's son, living in Baltimore. The bedstead on which Lincoln died was sold by Mr.

Peterson and passed eventually into the possession of Mr. Charles F. Gunther of Chicago. The clothes Mr. Lincoln had on when shot were sold by Forbes, his valet, to Mr. Frank G. Logan, also of Chicago. The small Deringer pistol with which Lincoln was shot, the ball which entered his brain, the small section of skull it carried with it, and the probes used in removing ball and bone, are in a safe in the office of the Judge-Advocate General, in the War Office, Washington. The bar of wood used by Booth in barricading the door is in a chest in the cellar of the State, War, and Navy Building, along with the knife wherewith Major Rathbone was slashed and a lot of other "exhibits" of the conspiracy trial, including Booth's saddle, the blue-and-black checked necktie he had on when shot, his compass with the candle drippings, his diary, etc. Here and there throughout the country are programmes of the evening claimed each to be "the one the President was holding when shot." None of these is authenticated. The flag in which Booth's spur caught hangs in the Treasury Department, whence it was borrowed. Mr. Charles Ford, of Baltimore, has the portrait of Washington, with its frame gashed by Booth's spur, which hung in the centre of the Treasury regimental flag draping the front of the box. The rocker in which Lincoln sat is in the possession of the Government. Mr. Osborn H. Oldroyd owns the spur Booth wore.

## APPENDIX XXIII

### DESPATCHES OF THE NIGHT

AT MIDNIGHT Colonel T. T. Eckert wired General Grant en route between Washington and Philadelphia: "The President was assassinated at Ford's Theatre at 10.20 to-night and cannot live. The wound is a pistol shot through the head. Secretary Seward and his son Frederick were also assassinated at their residence and are in a dangerous condition. The Secretary of War desires that you return to Washington immediately. Please answer on receipt of this." Half an hour later, Dana wired General Grant at Philadelphia: "Keep a close watch on all persons who come near you." At 1.30 Stanton telegraphed the news to General Dix at New York, still speaking of the assassin without a name. At 3.20 he telegraphed again to Dix saying: "Investigation strongly indicates John Wilkes Booth as assassin of the President. Whether he was at Seward's is unknown. His horse has been found." At 4.10: "It is now ascertained with reasonable certainty that two assassins were engaged in the horrible crime, Wilkes Booth being the one that shot the President,

the other a companion of his whose name is not known, but whose description is so clear that he can hardly escape."

As late as 8.40 P. M. Saturday, Dana wired to Buffalo a description of Booth and one of Atzerodt who was then thought to have been the assassin of Seward.

## APPENDIX XXIV

### STATEMENT OF MR. FIELD, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

ON FRIDAY evening, April 14, 1865, at about half-past ten o'clock, I was sitting in the reading-room at Willard's Hotel, engaged with a newspaper, when a person hurriedly entered the hotel and passed up the hall, announcing in a loud tone of voice that the President had just been shot at Ford's Theatre. I started to my feet, and had hardly reached the office when two other persons came in and confirmed the report — which at first I was hardly able to credit. I had parted about fifteen minutes previously with Mr. Mellen, of the Treasury Department, who had retired to his room for the night, and I at once went to him and communicated what had occurred, and we started together for the scene of the tragedy.

We found the streets already crowded with excited masses of people, and when we reached the theatre there was a very large assemblage in front of it as well as of the opposite house, belonging to Mr. Peterson, into

which the President had been conveyed. The people around the theatre related to us substantially the general facts connected with the assassination which have since been communicated to the public. The impression was prevalent, however, at that time, that the President had been shot in the breast, about the region of the heart, and that the wound might not prove fatal. After a few minutes we crossed the street, and endeavoured to gain admission into the house where Mr. Lincoln lay. This I effected with some little difficulty.

The first person whom I met in the hall was Miss Harris, daughter of United States Senator Ira Harris, of New York, who had been at the theatre with the Presidential party. She informed me that the President was dying, but desired me not to communicate the fact to Mrs. Lincoln, who was in the front parlour. Several other persons who were there confirmed the statement as to Mr. Lincoln's condition. I then entered the front parlour, where I found Mrs. Lincoln in an indescribable state of agitation. She repeated over and again. "Why did n't he kill me? Why did n't he kill me?"

I asked her if there was any service I could render her, and she requested me to go for Dr. Stone, or some other eminent physician. Both Dr. Stone and Surgeon-General Barnes had already been sent for, but neither

had yet arrived. On my way out I met Major T. T. Eckert, of the War Department, who told me that he was himself going for Dr. Stone. I then went for Dr. Hall, one of the most distinguished surgeons in the District. I found him at home, and he at once accompanied me. When we again reached the neighbourhood of the house access had become very difficult, guards having been stationed on every side.

After much effort, I was enabled to gain admission for Dr. Hall, but was not at that time permitted to enter myself; accordingly I returned to Willard's. The whole population of the city was by this time out, and all kinds of conflicting stories were being circulated. At three or four o'clock I again started for Mr. Peterson's house. This time I was admitted without difficulty. I proceeded at once to the room in which the President lay dying. It was a small chamber, in an extension or back building, on a level with the first or parlour floor. The President was lying on his back, diagonally across a low, double bedstead, his head supported by two pillows on the outer side of the bed.

The persons in the room were the Secretaries McCulloch, Stanton, Welles, and Harlan, Postmaster-General Dennison, the Attorney-General, the Assistant-Secretary of the Interior, Senator Sumner of Massachu-

setts, General Halleck, General Augur, General Meigs, General J. F. Farnsworth, of Illinois; General Todd, of Dakota; the President's assistant private secretary, Major Hay; the medical gentlemen, and perhaps two or three others. Dr. Stone was sitting on the foot of the bed. An army surgeon was sitting opposite the President's head, occasionally feeling his pulse, and applying his fingers to the arteries of the neck and heart.

Mr. Lincoln seemed to be divested of all clothing, except the bed coverings. His eyes were closed, and the lids and surrounding parts so injected with blood as to present the appearance of having been bruised. He was evidently totally unconscious, and was breathing regularly but heavily, and with an occasional sigh escaping with the breath. There was scarcely a dry eye in the room, and the scene was the most solemn and impressive one I ever witnessed. After a while, Captain Robert Lincoln, of General Grant's staff, and eldest son of the President, entered the chamber, and stood at the head-board, leaning over his father.

For a time his grief completely overpowered him, but he soon recovered himself, and behaved in the most manly manner until the closing of the scene. As the morning wore on, the condition of the President remained unchanged until about seven o'clock. In the



meantime, it came on to rain heavily, and the scene from the windows was in dreary sympathy with that which was going on within. Just before this, Mrs. Lincoln had been supported into the chamber, and had thrown herself moaning upon her husband's body. She was permitted to remain but a few minutes, when she was carried out, in an almost insensible condition.

At about seven o'clock the President's breathing changed in a manner to indicate that death was rapidly approaching. It became low and fitful, with frequent interruptions. Several times I thought that all was over, until the fitful respiration was resumed. At last, at just twenty-two minutes past seven o'clock, without a struggle, without a convulsive movement, without a tremor, he ceased breathing — and was no more.

Thus died this great, pure, kind-hearted man, who never willingly injured a human being — the greatest martyr to liberty the world has ever seen.

Shortly after his death, finding that his eyes were not entirely closed, I placed my hands upon them. One of the attendant surgeons first put nickel cents upon them, and then substituted silver half-dollars. It was twenty minutes or half an hour before the body commenced to grow cold. The lower jaw began to fall slightly, and the lower teeth were exposed. One of the medical

gentlemen bound up the jaw with a pocket-handkerchief. Mr. Stanton drew down the window-shades, and I left the chamber of death. Immediately after the decease, the Rev. Dr. Gurley had offered up a fervent and affecting prayer in the room, interrupted only by the sobs of those present.

When I left the room he was again praying in the front parlour. Poor Mrs. Lincoln's moans were distressing to listen to. After the prayer was over, I entered the parlour, and found Mrs. Lincoln, supported in the arms of her son, Robert. She was soon taken to her carriage. As she reached the front door, she glanced at the theatre opposite, and exclaimed several times: "Oh, that dreadful house! That dreadful house!" Immediately thereafter guards were stationed at the door of the room in which the President's body lay. In a few minutes I left myself. It is hoped that some historical painter will be found capable of portraying that momentous death scene.

## APPENDIX XXV

### SOUTHERN HORROR OF BOOTH'S DEED

SOUTHERN horror of Booth's deed was far more genuine and more widespread than many persons in the North were aware of. On April 16th, General R. S. Ewell and sixteen other generals of the Confederate States Army in prison at Fort Warren, addressed General Grant as follows:

LIEUT.-GEN. U. S. GRANT,  
Commanding U. S. Army.

GENERAL:

You will appreciate, I am sure, the sentiment which prompts me to drop you these lines. Of all the misfortunes which could befall the Southern people, or any Southern man, by far the greatest, in my judgment, would be the prevalence of the idea that they could entertain any other than feelings of unqualified abhorrence and indignation for the assassination of the President of the United States and the attempt to assassinate the Secretary of State," etc. (O. R. Series I., vol. xlvii., part iii., p. 787.)

The *Richmond Whig*, of April 17th, said: "The heaviest blow which has ever fallen on the people of the South has descended."

The *National Intelligencer*, Washington, reported in its issue of April 24th that "nearly the whole city of Memphis was draped in the habiliments of mourning, and the sorrow seemed to be universal."

In Savannah, Ga., a great mass-meeting was held on April 22d to "take fitting notice of the late appalling calamity which has befallen the nation in the death of its beloved head, Abraham Lincoln." And, in general, this attitude toward Booth's mad deed was pretty well shared.

Mrs. J. A. Hayes, of Colorado Springs, a daughter of Jefferson Davis, in August, 1907, wrote a letter to General William J. Palmer, in the course of which she said:

I was a small child at the time, and, like most Southern children, I looked upon Lincoln as the arch-enemy of my country; and, thoughtlessly, as the servants and guards around us were rejoicing, I ran to my father with what I supposed would be good news to him. He gravely and gently took me in his arms and explained to me that this terrible deed had been done by a crazy man who, no doubt, thought he was the saviour of the South, though really her very worst enemy. My father added, "Always remember, my little daughter, no wrong can ever make a right. The South does not wish her rights to come through dastardly murder, but through fair fight." Then he sighed deeply and said: "This is the bitterest blow that could have been dealt to the Southern cause. Lincoln was a just

man and would have been fair and generous in his treatment of the Southern people; his successor is a man we can expect nothing from."

Lincoln, who knew my father [would have known] . . . that Jefferson Davis and the other Southern men accused were incapable of instigating murder. . . . Jefferson Davis could never understand how such an impression could have gained foothold among the men who made history in the North, for many of them had known him and should have known that he was above so vile an action. (*World's Work*, February, 1908, p. 9902.)

## APPENDIX XXVI

### THE AWARDS

ON July 24th, 1866, the Committee on Claims, through its chairman, Hon. George W. Hotchkiss, of Binghamton, N. Y., made before the first session of the 39th Congress its report on the apportionment of the large rewards offered for the capture of Booth, Herold, Atzerodt, and Payne. It awarded Colonel Lafayette C. Baker and Colonel Everton J. Conger each \$17,500 of the \$75,000 due for the capture of Booth and Herold, but so strong was the dissatisfaction with this that the report was disapproved and the following apportionment substituted:

E. J. Conger, detective . . . . .	\$15,000
Lafayette C. Baker, detective . . . .	3,750
Luther B. Baker, detective . . . . .	3,000
Edward P. Doherty, in command of the cavalry . . . . .	5,250
James R. O'Beirne, detective . . . .	2,000
H. H. Wells, George Cottingham, Alexander Lovett, each \$1,000 . . . .	3,000
Sergeant Boston Corbett, Sergeant An- drew Wendell, Corporal Charles Zim-	

mer, Corporal Michael Uniac, Corporal John Winter, Corporal Herman Newgarten, Corporal John Walz, Corporal Oliver Lonpay, Corporal Michael Hormsbey, Privates John Myers, John Ryan, William Byrne, Philip Hoyt, Martin Kelley, Henry Putnam, Frank McDaniel, Lewis Savage, Abraham Genay, Emery Parady, David Baker, William McQuade, John Millington, Frederick Dietz, John H. Singer, Carl Steinbrugge, and Joseph Zisgen, each	
\$1,653.85 . . . . .	\$43,000
<hr/>	
	\$75,000

Wells and Lovett were among the officers who arrested Dr. Mudd and got from him information about the visit and departure of Booth and Herold. Dana, Williams, Gavacan, and Joshua Lloyd were other officers in the same "capture," but they got nothing. Cottingham was the special officer of Major O'Beirne's staff to whom, "through strategy," John M. Lloyd made his "confession." The soldiers were all of the 26th New York Cavalry. Major O'Beirne was the detective to whom the credit and reward for the capture of Booth and Herold should really have gone. (Baker, p. 565; Oldroyd, p. 87; Report No. 99, 39th Congress.)

For the capture of Atzerodt, the following awards were paid:

Major E. R. Artman, 215th Pennsylvania Infantry . . . . .	\$1,250.00
Sergeant L. W. Gemmill, 1st Delaware Cavalry . . . . .	3,598.54
Christopher Ross, David H. Baker, Albert Bender, Samuel J. Williams, George W. Young, James Longacre, privates 1st Delaware, and James Purdoan, citizen, each \$2,878.78 . . . . .	20,151.46
	<hr/>
	\$25,000.00

Major Artman was not present at the capture, but it was he who sent out from Monocacy Junction, Md., the force which effected the arrest.

The capture of Payne was rewarded as follows:

Major H. W. Smith . . . . .	\$1,000
Richard C. Morgan, Eli Devore, Charles H. Rosch, Thomas Sampson, W. M. Wermerskirch, each \$500 . . . . .	2,500
J. H. Kimball, citizen, and P. H. Clark, citizen, each \$500 . . . . .	1,000
Susan Jackson, Mary Ann Griffin, colored, each, \$250 . . . . .	500
	<hr/>
	\$5,000

Smith, Morgan, Devore, Rosch, Sampson, and Wermerskirch were the officers present. Susan Jackson



was a servant of Mrs. Surratt. She told her aunt, Mary Ann Griffin, working for J. H. Kimball, things she had seen or heard that might incriminate Mrs. Surratt. The two women told Mr. Kimball, and he started with them for General Augur's office. On the way they met P. M. Clark who joined the expedition. The Government paid \$1,500 to these four as "instrumental in setting the force in motion for taking possession of the Surratt house." This, although it had claimed to have done this on the evidence of Captain Gleason, who told Stanton what Weichmann had told him.

## APPENDIX XXVII

### TRIAL ATTENDANCE

“A perfect park of carriages stands by the door to the left, and from these dismount major-generals’ wives in rustling silks, daughters of congressmen attired like the lilies of the milliner, little girls who hope to be young ladies and have come up with ‘Pa’ to look at the assassins; even brides are here, in the fresh blush of their nuptials . . . they chatter and smile and go up the three flights of stairs to the court-room, about as large as an ordinary town-house parlour.” (George Alfred Townsend, “The Trial of the Conspirators,” p. 63.)

## APPENDIX XXVIII

### SPANGLER'S STATEMENT

EDWARD SPANGLER, soon after his release from prison, went to Dr. Mudd's, and there made his home until he died, about eighteen months later. "He was a quiet, genial man," says Miss Nettie Mudd, the doctor's daughter and biographer, "greatly respected by the members of our family and the people of the neighbourhood. His greatest pleasure seemed to be found in extending kindnesses to others, and particularly to children, of whom he was very fond. Not long after his death my father, in searching for a tool in Spangler's tool-chest, found a manuscript, in Spangler's own handwriting, and presumably written while he was in prison." The manuscript was as follows:

I was born in York County, Penn., and am about forty-three years of age. I am a house-carpenter by trade, and became acquainted with J. Wilkes Booth when a boy. I worked for his father in building a cottage in Harford County, Md., in 1854. Since A. D. 1853 I have done carpenter work for the different theatres in the cities of Baltimore and Washington, to wit:

The Holliday Street Theatre and the Front Street Theatre, of Baltimore, and Ford's Theatre in the city of Washington. I have acted also as scene-shifter in all the above-named theatres, and had a favourable opportunity to become acquainted with the different actors. I have acted as scene-shifter in Ford's Theatre ever since it was opened up to the night of the assassination of President Lincoln. During the winter of A. D. 1862 and 1863 J. Wilkes Booth played a star engagement at Ford's Theatre for two weeks. At that time I saw him and conversed with him frequently. After completing his engagement he left Washington and I did not see him again until the winters of A. D. 1864 and 1865. I then saw him at various times in and about Ford's Theatre.

Booth had free access to the theatre at all times, and made himself very familiar with all persons connected with it. He had a stable in the rear of the theatre where he kept his horses. A boy, Joseph Burroughs, commonly called "Peanut John," took care of them whenever Booth was absent from the city. I looked after his horses, which I did at his request, and saw that they were properly cared for. Booth promised to pay me for my trouble, but he never did. I frequently had the horses exercised, during Booth's absence from the city, by "Peanut John," walking them up and down the alley. "Peanut John" kept the key to the stable in the theatre, hanging upon a nail behind the small door, which opened into the alley at the rear of the theatre. Booth usually rode out on horseback every afternoon and evening, but seldom remained out later than eight or nine o'clock. He always went and returned alone. I never knew of his riding out on horseback and staying out all night, or of any person coming to the stable with him, or calling there for him. He had two horses at the stable only a short time. He brought them there some

time in the month of December. A man called George and myself repaired and fixed the stable for him. I usually saddled the horse for him when "Peanut John" was absent. About the first of March, Booth brought another horse and a buggy and harness to the stable, but in what manner I do not know; after that he used to ride out with his horse and buggy, and I frequently harnessed them up for him. I never saw any person ride out with him or return with him from these rides.

On the Monday evening previous to the assassination, Booth requested me to sell the horse, harness, and buggy, as he said he should leave the city soon. I took them the next morning to the horse-market and had them put up at auction, with the instruction not to sell unless they would net two hundred and sixty dollars: this was in accordance with Booth's orders to me. As no person bid sufficient to make them net that amount, they were not sold, and I took them back to the stable. I informed Booth of the result that same evening in front of the theatre. He replied that he must then try and have them sold at private sale, and asked me if I would help him. I replied "Yes." This was about six o'clock in the evening, and the conversation took place in the presence of John F. Sleichmann and others. The next day I sold them for two hundred and sixty dollars. The purchaser accompanied me to the theatre. Booth was not in, and the money was paid to James J. Gifford, who receipted for it. I did not see Booth to speak to him, after the sale, until the evening of the assassination.

Upon the afternoon of April 14th I was told by "Peanut John" that the President and General Grant were coming to the theatre that night, and that I must take out the partition in the President's box. I was assisted in doing it by Ritterspaugh and "Peanut John."

In the evening, between five and six o'clock, Booth came into the theatre and asked me for a halter. I was very busy at work at the time on the stage preparatory to the evening performance, and Ritterspaugh went upstairs and brought one down. I went out to the stable with Booth and put the halter upon the horse. I commenced to take off the saddle when Booth said: "Never mind, I do not want it off, but let it and the bridle remain." He afterward took the saddle off himself, locked the stable, and went back to the theatre.

Booth, Maddox, "Peanut John," and myself immediately went out of the theatre to the adjoining restaurant next door, and took a drink at Booth's expense. I then went immediately back to the theatre, and Ritterspaugh and myself went to supper. I did not see Booth again until between nine and ten o'clock. About that time Debonay called to me, and said that Booth wanted me to hold his horse as soon as I could be spared. I went to the back door and Booth was standing in the alley holding a horse by the bridle-rein, and requested me to hold it. I took the rein, but told him I could not remain, as Gifford was gone, and that all of the responsibility rested on me. Booth then passed into the theatre. I called to Debonay to send "Peanut John" to hold the horse. He came, and took the horse, and I went back to my proper place.

In about a half hour afterward I heard a shot fired, and immediately saw a man run across the stage. I saw him as he passed by the centre door of the scenery, behind which I then stood; this door is usually termed the centre chamber door. I did not recognize the man as he crossed the stage as being Booth. I then heard some one say that the President was shot. Immediately all was confusion. I shoved the scenes back as quickly as possible in order to clear the stage, as many were rushing upon it. I was very

much frightened, as I heard persons halloo "Burn the theatre!" I did not see Booth pass out; my situation was such that I could not see any person pass out of the back door. The back door has a spring attached to it, and would shut of its own accord. I usually slept in the theatre, but I did not upon the night of the assassination; I was afraid the theatre would be burned, and slept in a carpenter's shop adjoining.

I never heard Booth express himself in favour of the rebellion, or opposed to the Government, or converse upon political subjects; and I have no recollection of his mentioning the name of President Lincoln in any connection whatever. I know nothing of the mortise hole said to be in the wall behind the door of the President's box, or of any wooden bar to fasten or hold the door there, or of the lock being out of order. I did not notice any hole in the door. Gifford usually attended to the carpentering in the front part of the theatre, while I did the work about the stage. Mr. Gifford was the boss carpenter, and I was under him.

## APPENDIX XXIX

MRS. SURRATT AND JOHN NOTHEY

ON THE twelfth of April, 1865, George H. Calvert, Jr., a resident of Bladensburg, Md., wrote to Mrs. Mary E. Surratt as follows:

RIVERSDALE, April 12, 1865.

MRS. M. E. SURRATT:

Dear Madam: During a late visit to the lower portion of the county, I ascertained of the willingness of Mr. Nothey to settle with you, and desire to call your attention to the fact, in urging the settlement of the claim of my late father's estate. However unpleasant, I must insist upon closing up this matter, as it is imperative, in an early settlement of the estate, which is necessary.

You will, therefore, please inform me at your earliest convenience, as to how and when you will be able to pay the balance remaining due on the land purchased by your late husband.

I am, dear madam, yours respectfully,  
(C. T. p. 126.)                      GEORGE H. CALVERT, JR.

This was the letter which took Mrs. Surratt to Surrattsville on April 14th. While there she wrote a letter to Mr. John Nothey and gave it to Mr. B. F. Gwynn, a neighbour who had been privy to the transaction between the late



John Surratt and John Nothey, asking Mr. Gwynn to deliver the note to Nothey and to read it to him. (C. T. p. 126.) This Mr. Gwynn did. The note read:

SURRATTSVILLE, MD., April 14, 1865.

MR. JOHN NOTHEY:

Sir: I have this day received a letter from Mr. Calvert, intimating that either you or your friend have represented to him that I am not willing to settle with you for the land.

You know that I am ready, and have been waiting for the last two years; and now, if you do not come within the next ten days, I will settle with Mr. Calvert, and bring suit against you immediately.

Mr. Calvert will give you a deed on receiving payment.

M. E. SURRATT,

(C. T. p. 126.)

*Administratrix of J H. Surratt.*

These letters were produced as proof of the errand that called her to Surrattsville on Good Friday afternoon, but it was considered reasonable to adjudge the letters attempts to prove an excuse for going — the real reason being that she wished to carry a pair of field-glasses for Booth, and to tell the drunken Lloyd to have the carbines ready. It seems far likelier that if she were implicated in the plot she would have refused to go near Surrattsville that day.

## APPENDIX XXX

### JOHN P. BROPHY

MRS. SURRATT'S last words were to John P. Brophy to whom she said: "Good-bye — take care of Annie." On the sixth of January, 1908, Mr. Brophy, formerly a professor in Gonzaga College, Washington, and then a clerk in the Supreme Court, gave an address before the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, at Delmonico's, New York.

"His subject was the assassination of President Lincoln, with especial reference to the accusation brought against Mrs. Mary E. Surratt and her subsequent execution. Mr. Brophy was acquainted with several of the actors in the tragedy and its accompanying incidents, and was one of those who made an attempt to intercede on behalf of Mrs. Surratt.

"Mr. Brophy related at length the conception of the plot against Lincoln and the failure of the conspirators to carry out their first plan of kidnapping. The speaker told of Booth's meeting with John H. Surratt, Mrs. Surratt's son, and of the boy's joining in the first conspiracy to kidnap Lincoln. Mrs. Surratt, he said, knew nothing of it. Booth, happening to meet her as she was being handed into her carriage, and having already decided to kill Lincoln, instead of further pursuing the old plan to kidnap the President, asked her to take a package, which he said

contained a compass, and leave it for him at a certain hotel on her way. She willingly consented to do what seemed to her a trifling favour, and this act, innocent as it seemed, cost her her life.

“Her death, Mr. Brophy said, came about through the perjured statements of conspirator Lloyd, whom the speaker characterized as a ‘drunken sot,’ through the work of an ‘unlawful military tribunal,’ and the ‘usurpation’ of judicial power.

“When the trial was near its end, Mr. Brophy said, Louis J. Weichmann, who had been the chief witness against her, came to Mr. Brophy and wanted to know what the effect of his testimony had been. Mr. Brophy accused him of attempting to have an innocent woman killed, and Weichmann acknowledged to Mr. Brophy that he believed Mrs. Surratt to be innocent.

“‘Some time last winter,’ Mr. Brophy quotes the man as saying, ‘I suspected the plot against the President. I told a clerk in the War Department, and he informed Stanton. Stanton gave me the choice between turning State’s evidence and hanging. Terrified, I told what I had heard, and, although I believed Mrs. Surratt to be innocent, Mr. Stanton appeared to believe her guilty. I did not want to be hanged.’

“Mr. Brophy told Weichmann that he ought to try to avert the result of his testimony by telling the truth to Mr. Stanton. Weichmann replied that Stanton’s hatred of Catholics and of Southern women would be Mrs. Surratt’s undoing, and that he could do nothing to help her. Mr. Brophy went to the White House, but was not allowed to see President Johnson. Judge Holt would not let Mr. Brophy appear as a witness.

“The professor, failing to reach official ears, tried to publish what he had learned from Weichmann in the

*National Intelligencer*, of Washington, he says, but was told that the article was 'too strong.' Finally he published it in a pamphlet, and the morning after, before he was up, his room was searched by Government detectives, but the pamphlets had all been sent out, and nothing was found to incriminate him.

"Mr. Brophy told his hearers that all through the trial and the execution of Mrs. Surratt, papers proving her innocence were hidden in Stanton's safe. These papers included Booth's diary, which explained all the phases of the situation. He said that Stanton and Holt also knew that young Surratt had nothing to do with the assassination.

"Mr. Brophy quoted from a conversation which he had had with Chief Baker, of the Government detective bureau, in which he said that Baker asserted that Stanton and Holt were both so bigoted by nature that they stood ready to convict any Catholic on whom suspicion might for any cause fall.

"The speaker told of his effort to save Mrs. Surratt through his own affidavit, and after his being put out of the White House by soldiers by order of United States Senators Preston King, of Albany, and Lane, of Kansas. He said that Mrs. Surratt's father confessor, who called at the White House after that, with the doomed woman's daughter, Anna, were also driven away by the soldiers. Then Mrs. Stephen A. Douglas, he said, tried, and although she pushed past the soldiers and saw the President, accomplished nothing." (*Washington Post*, January 7, 1908.)

## APPENDIX XXXI

### THE HOLT-JOHNSON CONTROVERSY

THE petition to the President for clemency to Mrs. Surratt read as follows:

“To the President: The undersigned, members of the Military Commission appointed to try the persons charged with the murder of Abraham Lincoln, etc., respectfully represent that the commission have been constrained to find Mary E. Surratt guilty, upon the testimony, of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, late President of the United States, and to pronounce upon her, as required by law, the sentence of death; but in consideration of her age and sex, the undersigned pray your Excellency, if it is consistent with your sense of duty, to commute her sentence to imprisonment for life in the penitentiary.”

On February 11th, when the Holt-Johnson controversy was raging at its bitterest, Judge Holt wrote to Hon. John A. Bingham, one of his special Assistant-Judge-Advocates during the Conspiracy Trial, saying that he had personally presented the record of the trial and the findings of the Commission to the President, and called his attention to the recommendation for clemency, “and he read it in my presence.” (“The Assassination of Lincoln,” by T. M.

Harris, p. 408.) As this left only Holt's word against Johnson's, Holt was anxious to get the statement of some one else who knew that Johnson had seen and refused the plea. Judge Bingham replied that he had called the attention of Stanton to the recommendation for mercy, and that after Johnson denied having seen it, he (Bingham) called at Holt's office and asked for the papers in the case, finding the petition of the five commissioners attached. He also asked Secretaries Stanton and Seward if this petition had been presented to the President, and they said it had been duly considered by him and his advisers before the death-sentence of Mrs. Surratt was approved. Stanton refused, however, to let Bingham make this statement public. Attorney-General Speed wrote to Judge Holt in March, 1873, that he had seen the record of the Conspiracy Trial in the President's office, and the petition of the five commissioners was attached to it. But Mr. Speed would not say if the matter was discussed in Cabinet meeting. Hon. James Harlan remembered hearing the plea for clemency discussed by members of the Cabinet in the presence of President Johnson, not in regular meeting, but when there were "not more than three or four members present — Mr. Seward, Mr. Stanton, and myself, and probably Attorney-General Speed and others — but I distinctly remember only the first two." He said he

heard "one of these eminent statesmen" urge upon the President that clemency in this case "would amount to an invitation to assassins hereafter to employ women as their instruments." (Harris, p. 409.)

General Mussey, Johnson's private secretary, remembered that on Wednesday morning, July 5th, the President told him he "was going to look over the findings of the court with Judge Holt, and should be busy and could see no one." When, two or three hours later, Johnson told his secretary he had approved the sentences and ordered the execution for Friday, General Mussey asked him if that was n't a very short time to give the condemned for preparation. "He admitted that it was, but said that they had had ever since the trial began for 'preparation'; and either then or later on in the day spoke of his design in making the time short, so that there might be less opportunity for criticism, remonstrance, etc." General Mussey was sure (August 19, 1873 — Harris, p. 410) that Johnson told him of the recommendation for mercy, but said that sex was no proper plea and "there had not been women enough hanged in this war." General Henry L. Burnett, with John A. Bingham, Assistant-Judge-Advocate for the trial, attached the recommendation for mercy to the trial records and the findings of the court, and himself carried them to Judge Holt. On the fifth of July he happened to



be in Stanton's office when Judge Holt came in, and remarked that he was just come from going over the findings with the President. "What did he say about the recommendation to mercy of Mrs. Surratt?" Stanton asked, and Judge Holt repeated as the President's opinion what James Harlan heard "one of the eminent statesmen" of the Cabinet urge on him.

General Henry L. Burnett, at a meeting of the New York State Commandery of the Loyal Legion, April 3, 1889, delivered a lengthy address in Judge Holt's behalf from which all the above excerpts have been taken. In the *Century Magazine* for April, 1890, the Hon. Horatio King went over much the same ground, pleading Holt's innocence of Johnson's charges. In this article he quotes General Mussey as saying of Judge Holt's call at the White House on the morning of the execution, when Miss Surratt was there pleading to see the President, who had just overruled the habeas corpus plea: "I shall never lose the impression made upon me of your (General Holt's) deep pity for her (Miss Surratt) and of the pain which her distress caused you." The *North American Review* for July, 1888, also contains a statement of Holt's case presented in his own pleading with Mr. Speed to speak the word that would shatter Johnson's accusation. Stanton and Seward were then voiceless in the grave; only Speed



could lift the cloud from Holt's name. But though he replied most affectionately to Holt's pleadings, he would not give the lie to Johnson. Stanton said Holt must "rely upon the final judgment of the people," and by this final judgment, it is safe to say, Holt is vindicated of the charge of keeping back the plea for mercy. He still stands, however, accused of the crime of coaching perjurers to swear to the complicity of Jefferson Davis and the Southern leaders.

## APPENDIX XXXII

### JOHNSON'S ORDER FOR EXECUTION OF PAYNE, ATZERODT, HEROLD, AND MRS. SURRETT

THE sentences of the eight prisoners were submitted to the President on July 6th, by him approved, and that same day an order was issued from the Adjutant-General's office to General Hancock, commanding him to "cause the foregoing sentences in the cases of David E. Herold, G. A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, and Mary E. Surratt, to be duly executed, in accordance with the President's order." (C. T. p. 429.) The President's order was as follows:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, July 5, 1865.

The foregoing sentences in the cases of David E. Herold, G. A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, Michael O'Laughlin, Edward Spangler, Samuel Arnold, Mary E. Surratt, and Samuel A. Mudd, are hereby approved, and it is ordered that the sentences of said David E. Herold, G. A. Atzerodt, Lewis Payne, and Mary E. Surratt be carried into execution by the proper military authority, under the direction of the Secretary of War, on the seventh day of July, 1865, between the hours of ten o'clock A. M. and two o'clock P. M. of that day.

(C. T. p. 249.)

ANDREW JOHNSON, President.

## APPENDIX XXXIII

### JOHNSON'S REMARK ABOUT "THE NEST THAT HATCHED THE EGG "

JOHNSON'S oft-quoted remark about Mrs. Surratt, given as his excuse for refusing to commute her sentence "She kept the nest that hatched the egg," was made on the evening of July 7, 1865, to Dr. Butler, who was at the White House by appointment with some Tennessee ladies who were old friends of the Johnsons. There is a story to the effect that Johnson put himself, after signing the death-warrant, beyond all appeals for mercy by becoming insensibly drunk. Dr. Butler says that if he was drunk between Wednesday afternoon and Friday evening, he was certainly sober at the latter time. Knowing Dr. Butler to have been on the scaffold with Atzerodt, President Johnson asked him some questions about the hanging, and speaking of Mrs. Surratt expressed himself as above.

Night-clerk Burton of the National Hotel says that at one time during the winter of '64-'65 John Booth asked him for a room in the hotel to "hold a small meeting in,"

and Burton told him he could have it. But Booth went elsewhere with his meeting — to the Lichau House, probably — and Mr. Burton was saved from hanging, he thinks, on the same charge of “nest-keeping” that cost Mrs. Surratt her life.

## APPENDIX XXXIV

### JOHNSON'S DENIAL OF HABEAS CORPUS WRIT TO MRS. SURRETT

ON FRIDAY morning the counsel for Mary E. Surratt petitioned the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia for a writ of habeas corpus, urging the illegality of her trial and sentence by a military commission and the consequent illegality of her detention by General Hancock for execution. At 11.30 Friday morning, while the penitentiary yard was full of waiting spectators, General Hancock, accompanied by Attorney-General Speed, appeared before Judge Wylie of the Supreme Court of the District, and made the return plea that the body of Mary E. Surratt was in his possession "under and by virtue of an order" of the President, and "I do not produce said body by reason of the order of the President." The order was as follows:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE, July, 7, 1865, 10 A.M.  
TO MAJOR-GENERAL W. S. HANCOCK, Commander, etc.:  
I, Andrew Johnson, President of the United States, do hereby declare that the writ of habeas corpus has been heretofore suspended in such cases as this, and I do hereby

especially suspend this writ, and direct that you proceed to execute the order heretofore given you upon the judgment of the Military Commission, and you will give this order in return to the writ.

ANDREW JOHNSON, President.

The Supreme Court of the District ruled that it yielded to the suspension of the writ of habeas corpus by the President of the United States; and General Hancock proceeded to the Arsenal to order the execution.















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